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Sincerely Yours,
Sara A. Underwood.

AUTOMATIC

— OR —

SPIRIT WRITING,

WITH OTHER

PSYCHIC EXPERIENCES,

— BY —

SARA A. UNDERWOOD.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY B. F. UNDERWOOD.

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PREFACE.

In the interest of truth only have I prepared this book, and have herein given a plain, unvarnished statement of facts as they occurred, in the exact words of the communications as I have them in the original manuscripts. In most of these, especially after the first year, I wrote down at the time the questions asked by Mr. Underwood and myself, directly over the replies, so that I know without doubt to what the answers referred.

In the first year, however, I sometimes omitted writing the questions asked orally, and in regard to such had to trust to memory, or infer from the answer what those questions were. If, therefore, here and there occur trifling mistakes or repetitions they are due to this fact, and to the further fact of my having earlier written out, so that they could more easily be read, many of the communications, in re-writing which for this volume I have consulted both the original manuscripts as written by spirit power, and my own copies.

One thing, arising from my experience after the publication of the *Arena* article I wish to make clear in this Preface. Many persons at that time all over the country in their entirely blameless

anxiety for personal knowledge, wrote me letters, many of them particularly appealing to my sympathies, asking me either how they could obtain direct communication, or sending articles by which they hoped I might get *en rapport* with spirit friends of their's—though strangers to me—apparently thinking that the publication of my own experience made me in some sense a public medium at the command of outside parties.

The fact I wish now to emphasize is that it will be useless for any one reading this book to send me such letters or requests. I have an aversion to treating my private guests as public entertainers, further than making public, at their own request, those matters which ought to be known in the interest of truth, regarding man's being and destination.

More than this—I do not know what to advise in regard to other people getting such communication for themselves. They have here the record of my own experiences and that is all I know. With my own work to do in the world I have but little time to use in writing long letters to private persons, even were I willing to devote it to that purpose, setting aside other pursuits in order to do so. SARA A. UNDERWOOD.

Chicago, Ill., Nov. 25, 1895.

CONTENTS.

PREFACE ..... 5— 6

CONTENTS..... 7—10

INTRODUCTION—B. F. UNDERWOOD.....11—16

CHAPTER I. — PSYCHIC EXPERIENCES. — The *Arena* Article, with Introductory Remarks by B. F. U. Experiences in Automatic Writing. Remarkable Tests. Boehme. Other Communications. A Significant Vision..... 17—36

CHAPTER II.—FURTHER INSTANCES OF TRUTHFUL TESTS.—Interest in Psychical Research. Address before the Psychical Science Congress. The Author's Religious Education. Her Skepticism and Agnosticism. The Early Planchette Experience. The English Society for Psychical Research. Communications with Names Signed. Mr. Underwood's Presence a Necessary Condition. Messages Purporting to be from the Brownings. Further Tests. Reasons for giving these Experiences to the Public. Urgent Requests of the Invisibles. "Pharos" in Special Control. Statements made opposed to Views of the Author. Answers in Rhyme. Variety of Script. Always Normal, Alert and Ready to Question. Desire for Questions from Mr. Underwood. Cannot Anticipate Words. The Writing not always a Guide in Earthly Affairs. Letters from Mourning Hearts. Assumption of Great Names. Health not Affected.....37—58

CHAPTER III.—DOES SCIENCE EXPLAIN THIS?—Communications purporting to be from J. P. Mendum in which Facts given, unknown to Mrs. Underwood, were afterwards Corroborated. Two Autograph Signatures unknown to Mrs. U. written, One a Name She had never Seen Written or Heard Uttered. A Lawyer's Statement, "The Test to My Mind was quite Convincing." "I still live," Horace Seaver. A Communication in Printed Letters.....59—71

CHAPTER IV.—Conditions and Sense Limitations.—Cannot turn on the Faucet and draw unlimitedly from the Spirit World Reservoir. Difficulties in the way of Free Communications. Lack of Proper "Conditions" and Limitation of Sense Perceptions. Desire for Mr. Underwood's Attention. Responses to his Criticism of the Spirits. Why False Words are given. Beyond our Sphere Many Planes. Unfinished and Fragmentary Messages. Mixed Writing. Our Words convey no definite Ideas of Spirit Existence. Those studying A B C's of Life Cannot understand the X of Algebra.....72—86

CHAPTER V.—Analogies and Differences Between Spirit Life and Earth Life.—As to Location of the Spirit World. Space. Soul States. Different Spirit Planes. Spirit Life an Improvement on Earth Life. Spirits and Mediums. Spirit Progress. Different Grades of Spirits. Children in Spirit Life. Spiritual Schools. Evolution is the Law of Life. Soul Sympathies. Death a Change of Environment, a New Birth. When Born into Spirit Life. Spirit Language, Spirit Homes, Spirit Apparel. Answers to Questions about Spirit Locomotion, Individual Ownership. Spiritual Possessions. Interest in Science in Spirit Life. Inhabitants of other Planets. Cremation. Family Names and Affinities. Personal Immortality.....87—103

CHAPTER VI.—Experiences after Death.—"Joseph Barker wants to say a Word." His First Impression as He Awoke. His Answers to Questions. A Sorrowing Daughter's Message from her Father. A Test. From a Literary Light and from a Fellow Officer of Mr. U.'s in regard to the New Life. "Pharos" Amanuensis for B. R. and S. H. An Odd Communication. Other Communications.....104—120

CHAPTER VII.—Rhythmic Improvisation.—Rhymed Answers to Questions rapidly Written, often come Unexpectedly. Specimens. "Spirit Thoughts" in Verse. Bhama the name by which Mr. U. is addressed. Words of Comfort and Words of Advice in Verse. Verses on Spirit Life. Displays of Petulance in Rhyme. 121—131

CHAPTER VIII.—Spirit Teachings.—In regard to the All of Being. God. A Communication purporting to be from Boehme. Sin Against the Holy Ghost. Spirit and Matter. Love. Evil. Prophecy. Power of Prayer. Christian Science. Theosophy.....132—146

CHAPTER IX.—Spirit Teachings (Continued.) —Religion. Jesus. Reincarnation. Spirits have not Lost Sense of Humor. Contradictions. Ego. A Discussion on Will.....147—160

CHAPTER X.—Spirit Teachings (Continued.) —Names of Spirits. False Names. "Pharos" Sex. So-called Materializations. Evolution. The Differences between Kant and Hume. Animality and Spirituality.....161—172

CHAPTER XI.—Good-night and Friendly Messages.—Specimens in Prose and Rhyme. A Bit of Retaliatory Sarcasm. Wounded Sensibilities. Loving Messages of Adieu. Spirit vs. Matter. A Poem. Friendly Words, 173—182

CHAPTER XII.—Characteristic Communications.—Communications Purporting to come from Wordsworth, Swedenborg, Caroline Fox, Malthus, Darwin, St. Thomas, Aquinas, Lincoln, Robert Chambers, An Army Friend of Mr. Underwood's, Another Friend, W. R. Crooks, Saul of Tarsus. Oddities and Mysteries of Automatic Writing.....183—200

CHAPTER XIII.—Unique Communications.— Comical Satirical and Saucy Communications. A Slave-Girl's Story. A Boston Editor. An Army Chaplain. An Unnamed Communicant. About Indian Spirits.....201—214

CHAPTER XIV.—Request for Publication.— Urged from the First to Make Known these Experiences. Spirits' Eagerness to Gain a Public Hearing. Reports of Conversations on the Subject. Change of Tone from Anxiety to Satisfaction after the Decision to Publish...215—225

CHAPTER XV—Earlier Experiences with Planchette.—An Article on Planchette Written Twenty Years Ago Reproduced. Statement of Facts Interpreted in the Light of the Author's Present Views.....226—238

CHAPTER XVI.—Miscellaneous Teachings.—Spirits finding Fault with the Sitters, Charging them with Bigotry. Wants "Some of B. F. U.'s Conundrums." Materialism, Agnosticism, Spiritual Life, Theosophy and Spiritualism. Music, Flowers, Karma and Death. 239—251

CHAPTER XVII.—Miscellaneous Teachings (Continued.) — Words of Cheer, a Poem. Boehme on Earthly Sorrows. Salvation, Love, Goodness. Victor Hugo. A Curious Incident. Replies to Questions regarding G. H. Lewes, George Eliot, Herbert Spencer and Others. America's Most Useful Teachers. Aphorisms. 252—262

CHAPTER XVIII.—Some Psychic Incidents.—Was it a Warning? Found through a Dream. How did he Hear and See?.....263—278

CHAPTER XIX.—Corroborative Testimony.—Spiritualists' Faith does not Depend upon Individual Testimony. Cloud of Witnesses. 279—305

CHAPTER XX.—Does Death End Evolution?—Science cannot say when Evolution Began; still less when it Shall Stop. Silence of Physical Science as to the Soul of Man. The Accummulation of Phenomena called Spiritualistic. Crookes and Wallace Representing Broad and Liberal Investigators. The Work of the Psychical Researchers. Goethe's Metamorphosis of Plants; Man the Product of the Planets' Evolutionary Processes. Spiritual Ideals imply a Life in which to realize them. 306—311

CHAPTER XXI.—The Spiritual Conception of God.—The All-Embracing Power. Formulated Theories. "Who Dare Name Him and Who Avow." From Young, Dante, Emerson. 312—319

CHAPTER XXII.—The Future Life.—Heaven. The Higher Life. One World at a Time....320—331

CHAPTER XXIII.—Spiritual Possibilities.—Age in the Spirit World.....332—342

CHAPTER XXIV.—Foregleams.....343—348

CHAPTER XXV.—Specimens of Automatic Writing.—Difficulty of Disguising or Imitating Genuine Autographs. Plates Showing the Hand-writing of "Pharos" and Others.... 349—352

INTRODUCTION.

By that I know the learned lord you are!
What you don't touch, is lying leagues afar;
What you don't grasp, is wholly lost to you,
What you don't reckon, think you, can't be true;
What you don't weigh, it has no weight alas!
What you don't coin, you're sure it will not pass.

—Bayard Taylor's Translation of Goethe's Faust, Part II., p. 18.

Dr. W. F. Barrett, Professor of Experimental Physics in the Royal College of Dublin, says: "It is well-known to those who have made the phenomena of Spiritualism the subject of prolonged and careful inquiry, in the spirit of exact and unimpassioned scientific research, that beneath a repellant mass of imposture and delusion there remain certain indubitable and startling facts which science can neither explain nor deny."

Such a fact is automatic writing, the reality of which, among those who have examined the subject, is not in dispute, and further experiments can be of scientific value only in determining the physiological conditions and psychological implications of the phenomenon.

The word automatic is commonly applied to the processes of an organism which from frequent repetition during a long time have become mechanical—actions performed without volition, thought, or effort. The writing called automatic does not, in the thought or in the movement of the hand which holds the pen, form a part of any activity that is the result of repetition of previous mental experiences. or which can be properly classed under the term habit or instinct. It is automatic only in the sense that it is written without mental or physical effort on the part of the person by whose hand the writing is produced. The planning, thinking, arranging of thoughts and putting them into sentences,as well as the mechanical work of writing, are somehow done in a way to relieve the

psychic of all conscious effort in the process of thinking and reducing the thoughts to writing.

The psychic's knowledge of what is written is obtained by reading it in the usual way. Another person looking on may learn what is being written while the person whose hand is used to write, is still entirely ignorant in regard to its meaning. The views expressed are often at variance with those held by the psychic, while the hand-writing may not bear the least resemblance to that of the same hand when moved by the will and effort of its possessor.

Several times Mrs. Underwood's views on subjects in regard to which she has very pronounced opinions, have been vigorously combatted and long discussions between herself and the intelligence using her hand have resulted. She has, to my positive knowledge, written in this automatic way, statements which included matter-of-fact information, unknown to her and unknown to me, showing that the intelligence which supplied the thought and controlled the hand to write, had access to sources of knowledge beyond the conscious reach of the psychic. These are curious facts.

While this writing is done without directive volition or conscious thought or effort on the part of Mrs. Underwood, there is nothing whatever in the writing, as is evident from what has already been said, which indicates an automatic process. On the contrary it shows *discursive* intelligence, and sometimes of a high order, as the compilations of automatic communications in this volume unmistakably prove. Sometimes philosophical questions are discussed; at other times verse is composed with greater rapidity than Mrs. Underwood can write even prose in the ordinary way. I have seen written by her hand thirty or forty lines, quickly and without a pause; and a curious fact worth mentioning is that in several cases the poem was constructed in a way which showed that the whole must have been in the mind of the real author when the first verse was composed. Occasionally detailed, circumstantial statements respecting events and scenes are given. Some of the communications show humor, others marked

displeasure, etc. So far as I can judge the intelligence or intelligences with whom I have been, during the last few years, in communication through Mrs. Underwood's peculiar powers, are possessed of all the mental and moral qualities manifested by the men and women we meet in daily life.

The messages received automatically, in every case that has come under my observation, have purported to be from extra-mundane minds and almost invariably from spirits that once dwelt in the flesh, now discarnate and freed from material conditions. The intelligence manifested by the writing shows varying degrees of intelligence and power of expression, indicating apparently the presence at different times, of different personalities.

If it is the subconscious self, as some students of this phenomenon imagine, that moves the hand and supplies the thought, then it deceives the upper self. Judging from the character of the intelligence that gives such answers to questions as are published in this book, it ought to be able to distinguish between this earthly state of being and another real or imagined, and between itself and other personalities. If it knows enough to make these distinctions, it must, if it is a part of the psychic's mind, be given to wilful deception, while the psychic's conscious self is, as to veracity and trustworthiness, beyond suspicion. If the subconscious self is thus subject to illusion and hallucination, how can reasoned thought and discriminating remarks come from such a mental source?

Some French physiological psychologists have supposed that a portion of the self becomes alienated and appears to the mind as a separate, foreign personality—rather a far-fetched hypothesis to account for a mental phenomenon one of the peculiarities of which is that it sometimes surpasses the conscious mind of the psychic in the power of thought shown, knowledge of facts, and in force and facility of expression.

The spiritualistic view, although it involves questions that cannot now be answered (which is equally true of

all the theories of physical sciences) is the most simple explanation and the one from which many of the best thinkers see no way of escape. There are many who have not been predisposed in favor of Spiritualism, who in the interests of truth feel compelled to say with Rev. Minot J. Savage:

"I have been told things which neither the medium nor myself knew, or could by any possibility have known. If there is any other theory than a spiritualistic one to explain facts of this sort, I don't know what it is."

"I am in possession of a respectable body of facts that I do not know how to explain except on the theory that I am dealing with some invisible intelligence. I hold that as the only tenable theory I am acquainted with."

Mr. F. W. H. Myers who has made automatic writing a subject of prolonged and careful investigation says that in some of the automatic massages received he cannot avoid the conviction that it is the "departed personality" which originates them.

It is true, as is often said in a critical spirit, that many of the messages purporting to be from the spirit world, are vague or puerile, or both. But as Mrs. Beecher Stowe wrote in 1872: "Do invisible spirits speak in any wise, wise or unwise? is the question *a priori*. I do not know of any reason why there should not be as many foolish virgins in the future state as in this."

Considered only as a means of obtaining information otherwise than through the sensory channels, automatic writing is profoundly significant as well as interesting. As Prof. Alfred Alexander of Brazil, who has studied the subject carefully, says:

"As a means for obtaining supernormal information, I have more faith in automatic writing than in somnambulism. It would appear that it is less interfered with by the personality of the medium and is more guarded against the influence of surrounding minds. It may not be merely fanciful to say that the supraliminal self, being awake, stands sentinel over the operation and prevents the ingress of disturbing forces."

Automatic writing is not merely of recent appearance, but until the last few years it has not attracted the attention of official, orthodox science. Many persons in private life having these experiences—writing words, sentences and long essays in prose and poetry without any mental effort or muscular exertion, without any conscious participation in the production of the writing, came to see when they ventured to mention the facts, that they were regarded as victims of hallucination, if not indeed as designing frauds. It is not strange that they sometimes lost respect for the fairness and judgment of scientific men, that among them were persons who were too ready to accept the messages which came to them in this mysterious manner from an unknown source, as veritable revelations of truth to be believed and followed implicitly.

It is different now when, identified with the investigation of this subject are the names of men like Flammarion, Binet, Richet, Janet, Ribot in France: Crookes, Wallace, Lodge, Barrett, Sidgwick and Myers in England; and Prof. William James, Rev. M.J.Savage, and Dr. Richard Hodgson in this country.

Probably automatic writing and trance speaking are of a kindred nature, and the less common phenomenon of voice hearing may have a similar basis. Socrates who is regarded as the wisest man of the ancient world, had his daemon that warned him against danger, and often, as he believed, showed a wisdom greater than his own. Joan of Arc following the voices, led the soldiers of France to victory.

It is not improbable to my mind that much of the so-called sacred literature of the world, was written by scribes who were moved to write by intelligence which they could not identify with their own, and which they believed was divine. The Koran, the sacred authority and guide for many millions of people, was I believe produced in this supernormal manner, and may it not be true of some of the books of the Bible?

Spiritualism wisely teaches that all "communications" and revelations, from whatever source they profess to come,

should be tested by their intrinsic merits. In religion and morals, the experience and wisdom of mankind, through the ages of the past, have an authority in accepted axioms and precepts by which later revelations must to a great extent be judged, regardless of the sources from which they profess to emanate or the names by which they are endorsed.

I have carefully read Mrs. Underwood's statements in this volume in regard to the communications given, and I can honestly testify to their correctness. She has been pains-taking and conscientious in making all her records of what has occurred, and if there are errors in her narration, such errors are of an unessential character, and I have not been able to detect them.

Whatever scientific or quasi-scientific solutions may be suggested, Mrs. Underwood, whose hand has been used in the way described, during the last five years, is personally convinced, beyond all doubt, of spirit agency in these communications. These experiences came to her at a time of life when observation and reflection should have disciplined her mind to a state of judicial strength and firmnesss, for she had lived fifty years before experiences occurred of a character to make any serious and deep impression as to the reality of extra-mundane influence.

These experiences have convinced her, as nothing in the orthodox faith held by her ancestors, in which she was educated, had or could, of the truth and reasonableness of the soul's survival of death and of its progressive existence in spheres beyond this mortal life.

Herbert Spencer says that a condition of success in all departments of scientific research is "an honest receptivity and willingness to abandon all preconceived notions, however cherished, if they be found to contradict the truth."

I am sure that Mrs. Underwood has in her investigations faithfully observed and complied with this condition.

B. F. UNDERWOOD.

AUTOMATIC WRITING.

CHAPTER I.

PSYCHIC EXPERIENCES.

In order to give the reader a clear idea of the experiences related in this work I shall be obliged to make it more largely personal than I should otherwise care to. I also wish it to be clearly understood that I do not claim the experiences here recorded to be at all unique as I am well aware that they are in the line of the experiences of thousands of people, some of which have been put into print, but the majority of which remain only as personal evidence to those receiving them of the continuity of man's existence in spheres beyond the change which sense-limitations have taught us to call death.

My first psychic experiments were made with planchette about 1872, some statements in regard to which will be made later on. These experiments puzzled me, but not being undertaken very seriously they soon became so frivolous in character that I lost all interest in them, and for many years after did not care to search further, my studies in physical science having brought my thought to the agnostic standpoint.

In the Fall of 1889 I began to get automatic writing of so impressive a character as to command the serious attention of myself and husband, and

finally, by the urgent request of the intelligences writing through my hand, sent to the *Arena* a statement of some of the incidents, as embodied in the following reprint of that article which appeared in that magazine in August, 1891, and which brought us many letters of inquiry and corroborative experiences from hundreds of readers:

PSYCHIC EXPERIENCES.

BY SARA A. UNDERWOOD.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS BY B. F. UNDERWOOD.

The statements in this paper as to what was written in my presence purporting to be communications from "spirits," and as to the circumstances under which it was written, are scrupulously correct. The "communications," it is certain, are from an intelligent source. Mrs. Underwood is the person by whose hand they are put in form. That she is not laboring under a mistake in thinking that she is unconscious of the thought expressed until she has read the writing,—if, indeed, such a mistake in a sane mind is possible,—I am certain. Sometimes, owing to the illegibility of the writing, she has to study out sentences.

The writing varies in style, not only on different evenings, but on the same evening; it is apparently the writing of not fewer than twenty persons, and generally bearing no resemblance whatever, so far as I can judge, to Mrs. Underwood's handwriting, which is remarkably uniform. The communications are unlike in the degrees of

intelligence, in the quality of thought, and in the disposition which they show. Detailed statements of facts unknown to either of us, but which, weeks afterwards, were learned to be correct, have been written, and repeated again and again, when disbelieved and contradicted by us.

All the writing has been done in my presence, but most of it while I have been busily occupied with work which demanded my undivided attention. The views expressed are often different from my own, and quite as frequently, perhaps, opposed to Mrs. Underwood's views.

Some will, doubtless, interpret these facts as evidence and illustrations of the multiplex character of personality, and will regard these communications, apparently indicating several distinct intelligences, as manifestations of different strata, so to speak, of the same individual consciousness. Knowledge of the facts unknown to our ordinary consciousness was, nevertheless, some will say, in the sub-consciousness of one of us, or perhaps of both. On this theory, of course it must be supposed that the mind has stored away in its depths knowledge acquired in ways unknown. By others all the phenomena related by Mrs. Underwood will be regarded as the work of disembodied, invisible, intelligent beings who once dwelt in the flesh and lived on the earth, but who are now in a higher sphere of existence, yet able under certain conditions to make their presence and their thoughts known to us.

It is not my intention here to advocate any theory as to the cause of the phenomena described by Mrs. Underwood. I simply testify now to the

accuracy of all those statements in her paper in regard to her automatic writing.

B. F. UNDERWOOD.

"The known is finite, the unknown is infinite; intellectually we stand on an islet in the midst of an illimitable ocean of inexplicability. Our business in every generation is to reclaim a little more land; to add something to the extent and solidity of our possessions.—*Huxley in "Reception of the 'Origin of Species.'"*

Public attention at this time especially is being called to various forms of psychic phenomena measurably through the efforts of the Society for Psychical Research in investigating and sifting the evidence for the stories of apparitions, hallucinations, forewarnings, etc., but more because so many who have heretofore scoffed at and doubted such stories, or who have been foiled in their efforts to obtain for themselves any satisfactory evidence that such phenomena really occur, are now able to testify from there own experience, in one form or another, that such are real facts of our existence.

The questions raised by the class of facts already elicited through this investigation are of supreme importance, and it becomes the duty of every serious-minded enquirer who has had experience of this kind to give the result of his investigations to the public, and thus aid those searching for the underlying cause of all such phenomena. Therefore after considerable hesitation, and with some inward shrinking from an obvious duty, I have concluded to take the consequences of publishing my own recent experience.

A word of personal explanation may here be

necessary. A sincere believer in orthodox Christianity until my twentieth year, I have been led by careful study and unfaltering love of truth to give up my belief in Christian dogmas, and have for some years known no other name by which to designate my state of mind in regard to religious belief than that misunderstood and often misapplied term, agnostic. But at no stage in my mental progress have I ever felt sure that I had reached any conclusion which was final, and at no time have I been a believer in Spiritualism, or been convinced that we survive the present state of being; while always I have felt an interest in every undecided question in science and religion, and earlier have had some "intimations of immortality," which have caused me to think seriously on the subject and to long for more light. I have decided to lay the simple facts of my most recent experience before the readers of the *Arena*, and allow them to draw what conclusions they will without offering any theory of my own.

More than a year ago my interest in psychic phenomena was awakened by reading the reports of the Society for Psychical Research, but it has been my own personal experience which has created a profound impression on my mind. If any one who reads this will try to imagine in what spirit he would greet an entire stranger or group of strangers, who through the telephone, for instance, should send him genial messages full of common sense, philosophy, humor, and friendliness, giving him interesting details of a strange land, he can partially understand the state of mind in which, after many months of such inter-

course, I find myself. Except on two or three occasions no one has been present but my husband and myself.

The modus operandi is the simplest possible. As I remembered that Mr. Underwood was rather averse to the planchette experiments of former years, thinking them unwholesome and deteriorating in their tendency, I at first said nothing to him of my new psychical experiments, though these were made oftenest in his presence in the evening when we both sat at one writing table, near each other, busied with our individual literary work. As I experimented in his absence as well as in his presence, I soon found that I got the most coherent writings when he was present. Indeed I could get nothing coherent, and very frequently nothing at all, when he was away, but when he was present the communications began to grow strangely interesting, and as he was called upon repeatedly, I felt obliged to invite his attention, when the most surprising answers were given, which roused his curiosity and interest. It has been explained that his presence is necessary for me to obtain writing, as "blended power is best." Two or three times, at the suggestion of this intelligence, we have asked two of our intimate literary friends—non-Spiritualists—to be present, but each time with comparative failure; afterwards we were informed that the cause of failure was the introduction of persons unused to the conditions, who broke up the harmonious relations necessary to communication; in time they could be of help.

It would take a volume to present all the

interesting statements as to an advanced stage of existence, only hidden from us because of the inadequacy of our sense perceptions, and by the conditions imposed upon us at this stage of our progress, which have been given from this source. Explanations have been made why communication through the agency of certain persons, though not through all, are possible. The conditions, it is alleged, are not entirely dependent upon the superior intelligence or morality of the persons with whom the intelligences can become en rapport. These invisibles declare that they are as seriously and anxiously experimenting on their side to discover modes of untrammelled communication with us, as we on our side ought to be, if what they write be true, and if such a thing be possible. "Spirits" they persistently insist upon being called.

In this paper I can give only a statement of some things which do not seem explicable on the hypothesis of mind-reading, thought-transference, hypnotism, or subconsciousness. In all these experiments I have been in a perfectly normal state. The only physical indication of any outside influence is an occasional slight thrill, as of an electric current, from my shoulder to the hand which holds the waiting pen. Step by step I have been taught a series of signals to aid me in correctly reading the communications. I have no power to summon at will any individual wished for. I have repeatedly, but in vain, tried to get messages from some near and dear friends.

It has been explained that on their side, as on ours, certain "conditions" must exist in order to

get in "control." When "eh ?" is written I know that the operator at the other end of the line is ready to communicate. When in the middle of a sentence or a word "gone" or "change" is written, I understand that the connection is broken, and I must not expect the completion of that message. When a line like this——is drawn, it is a sign that that sentence is completed or the communication ended. So with other things. Rhymes are often unexpectedly written, especially if the "control" professes to be a poet, and they are dashed off so rapidly that I do not understand their import until the close when I can read them over. Impromptu rhyming is a feat utterly impossible to either Mr. U. or myself. Names persistently recur which are unknown to us. Many different handwritings appear, some of them far superior to my own.

When I first began to get communications I destroyed, in a day or two after they were written, the slips of paper containing the writing, but as the developments became more interesting, Mr. U. suggested that they be preserved for reference. I acted on this suggestion, and thus in the instances of facts given outside our own knowledge, I am enabled to give the exact wording of each communication. Our questions were asked viva voce, and as they were often suggested by what had been previously written, I either at the time or soon afterward wrote them just above the reply. I am not, therefore, trusting at all to memory in the statements I shall make.

A gentleman of this city (whom I will call John Smith, but whose real name was a more uncommon

one) with whom Mr. U. had been acquainted many years, but of whose family relations he knew little, died here more than a year ago. Mr. U. had met him but once in the year previous to his death, he having been away on account of failing health, staying, we understood, with a daughter recently married, whose home was in Florida. The first name of this married daughter, or of any of Mr. Smith's daughters except one, was unknown to Mr. U. I had met one of his daughters whose name I knew to be Jennie. I also knew that there was another named Violet. I was not sure, however, whether this was the name of the married one, or of another unmarried, but had the impression that Violet was unmarried.

One evening while waiting for automatic writing with no thought of Mr. Smith in my mind, and Mr. U. sitting near me at the table with his thoughts concentrated on an article he was preparing, this was written: "John Smith will now enter into conversation with B. F. Underwood." I read this to Mr. U. who laid aside his pen, and in order to test the matter, asked if Mr. Smith remembered the last time they met, soon after his return from the South, and a short time previous to his death. There was some delay in the answer, but soon the reply came "On Madison Street." "Where-abouts on Madison?" was asked. "Near Dearborn." "At what hour?" "About 10 a.m.—raining."

As it was rarely that Mr. U. was in that part of the city at so early an hour, and especially on a rainy day, I doubted the correctness of this reply, but Mr. U. recalled to my mind the unusual circumstance which made it necessary for him to be

in that vicinity on the day and at the hour named, on which he and Mr. Smith, he distinctly remembered, last met. Only a few words passed between them on account of the rain. After this, writing, purporting to be from Mr. Smith, came frequently. Very soon something was written which induced Mr. U. half sportively, to inquire whether there was anything which troubled Mr. Smith, anything which he wished he had done but had omitted before his death. The answer came. "One thing—change deeds on Violet's account. None of my wife's are at my daughter's disposal. All in her own disposal.

Mr. U. asked if it was meant that he had not left his property—for he was a man of some wealth—as he now wished he had. "You are right," was written, "Want all my girls to share alike." "Which daughter do you refer to?" was asked. "Went away from her in Florida—Violet," was the answer. I remarked, "Why, I thought Violet was one of the unmarried girls, but it must be that that is the name of the married daughter." Then Mr. U. was strongly urged to call on Mr. Smith's married son, James, with whom Mr. U. had a slight acquaintance, and tell him of this communication. "Clearly state my desire that my daughter Violet share equally with her sisters." Of course this was utterly out of the question.

At that time we had no intention of informing any one of our psychic experience, and if we had, Mr. James Smith would have thought us insane or impertinent to come to him with so ridiculous a story, the truth of which we ourselves strongly doubted. Pages were, however, written concern-

ing the matter in so earnest and pleading a manner that I came to feel conscious-stricken at refusing to do what was asked, and to shrink from seeing Mr. Smith's name appear. Once was written:

Say to James that in my new position, and with my new views of life, I feel that I did wrong to treat his sister as I did. She was not to blame for following out her own convictions, when I had inculcated independent thought and action for all.

This and other sentences of the kind seemed to convey the idea that Violet had in some way incurred his displeasure by doing according to her own will in opposition to his. This was puzzling to us, as we thought that in her marriage, at least, the daughter we thought to be Violet had followed her father's wishes.

A few week's later, however, came an unlooked-for verification of Mr. Smith's messages. In a conversation between Mr. U. and a business friend of Mr. Smith, who was well acquainted with all his affairs, regret was expressed that so wealthy a man had left so little for a certain purpose. Mr. U. then inquired as to what disposition had been made of his property, and was told that he had left it mainly to his wife and children—so much to this one, and that. "But Violet," continued Mr. U.'s informant, "was left only a small amount, as Mr. Smith was angry because she married against his wishes." "Why," remarked Mr. U., "I understood that he approved of the match, and the fact that he accompanied herself and husband to Florida, and remained with them some time, would seem to indicate that." "Oh, you are thinking of Lucy,

the eldest girl; her marriage was all right, but Violet, one of the younger daughters, going to Florida with her father, fell in love with a young man of whom her father did not approve, so she made a runaway marriage, and on account of his displeasure, Mr. Smith left her only a small sum." The intelligence writing was aware of facts unknown to either Mr. U. or myself, and no other persons were in the room when these communications were given.

One evening one of us spoke of the frequently false and mischievous statements purporting to come from spirits—predictions which did not come to pass, descriptions which were wholly wrong, and sending credulous believers on wild-goose chases after hidden treasure, etc., the occasion being an untrue statement made to us in regard to the death of a friend who was alive and well. We asked if this unseen intelligence would explain why this was allowed. Reply came promptly, "Rather tough problem. There are certain phases of our existence here which are not explainable to you on your plane, and the test we were obliged to make of your credulity was one of these."

We protested against such tests, and I declared that I would not try to receive communications if they practised deception. "Why do you protest," was written, "when you already know you are but a tyro in this phase of being? You don't now willingly do the work assigned you, and B. F. U. is still harder to manage." Thereupon Mr. U. suggested "that without sense organs and a material environment, conditions would be such,

perhaps, that they could not be expressed in terms known to us, nor be even conceived by us." Immediately was written: "Many wish to answer B. F. U.'s clear statement of the difficulties in the way of spirit intercourse with those still in the flesh, but now comes the one soul capable of clear answer. Blessed be they who question—gone." Next came this—"Boehme wants to reply."

Here I have to confess that never having paid much attention to occult or mystical literature the name Boehme was utterly unknown to me, and at this point I asked Mr. U., "Did you ever hear of anyone by the name of B-o-e-h-m-e?" spelling the word. "Certainly," he replied, "Jacob Boehme, he was a German thinker who died—" my hand began to move just then, and he paused, and while the following was being written my mind reverted hazily to a German philosophical writer, who had died within a few years, and of whose life one of our friends had written a sketch. His name began with B, and I thought he was the one Mr. U. referred to, as I had forgotten what the full name was. I say this to explain that there could be no thought-transference in this instance from Mr. U.'s mind to mine. This was written rapidly.

Death and life are but two phases of one truth, and when what mankind calls death comes, it is as we experience the change that all our circumscribed relations to Banded Universalities become clear; but when we try to explain to those not yet beyond man's sphere we find ourselves at a loss because there is nothing parallel in this state of existence with your knowledge.

Afterwards Mr. U. showed me in the encyclopædia a sketch of him (the name spelled Bohme, and in several other ways) in which it was stated he "had a very fertile imagination, and a remarkable faculty of intuition, and professed to be divinely inspired," and that he died in 1624. Since then I have found another sketch of his life which says that "owing to the fantastic terminology he thought fit to adopt, his writings are condemned by many as utterly unintelligible." This may explain the "Banded Universalities," a phrase I never in my life saw before, and only dimly understand now; I had never to my knowledge read a word of his writings.

In my case, as in that of many who profess to give spirit messages, frequently names of dead thinkers and heroes are signed. I protested against this, saying I did not believe that these individuals were the ones who communicated, and asked for some explanation. Immediately this answer was written:

Elaine and Guinevere were not real beings but types—so somewhere in our sphere are spirits who embody cleverness in creations of their fancy, and adopt names suited to their ideas.

Since this explanation was given, I have had more patience with the communications signed by great names, because I have imagined that these are types aspired to by the real writers. But their "cleverness in creations of their fancy" extends sometimes to fair imitations of the thought and style of those whose names they borrow. For instance, since Elizabeth Barrett Browning is one of my favorite poets, it is not at all strange that

her name and that of her husband might be suggested by my own mind; my own mind ought also to suggest the thought of the following, written as from Mrs. Browning, though the phraseology is not mine.

Robert gave me life. He gave me to Love. He and I are but two sides of one individuality. We both understand this, as you understand it.

But then followed without any apparent pause for a word, this:

Let your own hearts deeply feel
The sweet songs of older lovers,
So shall song and sense appeal
To all that true emotion covers.

I never saw these lines anywhere, and I doubt whether anyone has seen them before, while I am confident that I did not compose them. I had not then read Browning's "One Word More," but two days later in a magazine article I came across a quotation from that poem in which occurs the phrase "older lovers," the magazine having been brought to the house that day, and two days after the verse was written. A day or two later at the close of a communication from an entirely different source, and one in no way suggestive of Browning, the words, "One Word More" were rapidly written, followed by this verse:

Round goes the world as song-birds go,
There comes an age of overthrow—
Strange dreams come true, yet still we dream
Of deeper depths in Life's swift stream.

This I did not compose, nor had I ever heard or seen it before.

One evening it was promised that "Brain

workers of philosophical bent" would answer our questions. The first question asked was,

Question—From your standpoint do you consider death the end of conscious existence?

Answer—Death we know only as a phrase used to indicate change of environment.

Q.—Is death expected on your plane as on ours, or do all understand that the next change is progressive?

A.—Slow are even those on our plane to understand the law of unending evolution.

Q.—But we may apprehend what we do not fully understand or comprehend?

A.—Comprehension sees farther than understanding. Comprehend means complete understanding.

Q.—Do you mean that comprehension is a word of wider significance than understanding?

A.—You are right.

I had never given any thought to the difference between the words "understanding" and "comprehending," and when this was written was not satisfied in my own mind that comprehend did mean more than understand. On the following day I consulted Worcester's Unabridged Dictionary and to my surprise, under the word "comprehend" found this note: "Comprehend has a more extensive meaning than understand or apprehend." So in this case, as in several others I have not time to cite here, the intelligence which moved my hand to write gave me knowledge which I did not myself possess. Very often in place of writing, all I could get from them would be spiral lines. Sometimes a page would be crossed and recrossed with these lines as if with some definite purpose. This suggested to me the possibility that such

lines held some meaning unknown to me, and I put the question. The answer was given :

We have different modes of thought from yours —and the spiral signs are most in use with us : Some of our less advanced scientists forget that on your plane our mode of control is not understood by you. Lines are made of such esoteric meaning that, while we understand at a glance, it is impossible for those on your plane to perceive any words.

Mr. Underwood here remarked : "There are numerous spirals—all modifications of the primary straight line." Then came the following :

Yes, the spiral is a primal law, simple yet complex, which we who understand life's manifold ascensions grow to symbolize in our thought, language and writing.

I am warned by the length of this paper that I must close without being able to give one tenth part of the many strange and surprising philosophical and other revelations or statements, which we have gained from this strange source. I have confined myself to those which show most strongly evidence of an intelligence outside of Mr. U. or myself, the only two persons who have been concerned in obtaining them. To me personally these are not the most wonderful phases of this influence. The reasonable explanations given of the laws governing another state of human existence, but very little different from this except in being a step forward in the direction of Mind—that is to me the most wonderful, but of that I cannot speak here.

I know that my experience at this time is by

no means exceptional. Before I had ever said one word to any human being except Mr. U. in regard to it, there came to me a confidential letter from a valued friend in another State, a lady of intellect and culture, confessing that like, but far more varied, phenomena were occurring through her. Like myself her position had been that of an agnostic, and the communications to her are very similar to those I have obtained. I had not heard from her in a year previous to the receipt of this letter. I have been told of two or three other cases, so far unknown to the public, all occurring within the year, and to non-Spiritualists. And I judge from magazine articles written by such well-known people as O. B. Frothingham, Elizabeth Phelps Ward, and M. J. Savage, as well as from public utterances of Mrs. Livermore and others, that this wave of communication from some not fully understood source is far more extensive than is generally suspected. It is, therefore, time that all whose opinions may have weight, who have personal knowledge of such phenomena, relate what they have seen or experienced in order that the phenomena may be compared, and the real source from which they emanate may be discovered, if possible.

One other strange experience in this line came to me a few years ago at the bedside of a dear friend at the point of death, which, perhaps, may be related in this connection. It was near midnight; death was momentarily expected. All the other watchers, exhausted by days of grief and care, were snatching an hour of rest; and I stood alone looking at the unconscious face before me

which was distinctly visible, though the light was heavily shaded to keep the glare from the dying eyes. All her life my friend had been a Christian believer, with an unwavering faith in a life beyond this, and for her sake a bitter grief came upon me because, so far as I could see, there were no grounds for that belief. I thought I could more easily let her go out into the unknown if I could but feel that her hope would be realized, and I put into words this feeling. I pleaded that if there were any of her own departed ones present at this supreme moment could they not and would they not give me some least sign that such was the fact, and I would be content.

Slowly over the dying one's face spread a mellow radiant mist—I know no other way to describe it. In a few moments it covered the dying face as with a veil, and spread in a circle of about a foot beyond, over the pillow, the strange yellowish-white light all the more distinct from the partial darkness of the room. Then from the center of this, immediately over the hidden face, appeared an apparently living face with smiling eyes which looked directly into mine, gazing at me with a look so full of comforting assurance that I could scarcely feel frightened. But it was so real and so strange that I wondered if I were temporarily crazed, and as it disappeared I called some one from another room, and went out into the open air for a few moments to recover myself under the midnight stars. When I was sure of myself I returned and took my place again alone. Then I asked that, if that appearance were real and not an hallucination, would it be made once more manifest

to me; and again the phenomenon was repeated, and the kind, smiling face looked up at me—a face new to me yet wondrously familiar.

Afterwards I recalled my friend's frequent description of her dead father whom she dearly loved, but whom I had never seen, and I could not help the impression that it was his face I saw, the hour that his daughter died.

CHAPTER II.

FURTHER INSTANCES OF TRUTHFUL TESTS.

By request of the Committee of the Psychical Science Congress, which held its session in Chicago during five days in August, 1893, I gave an address before that Congress embodying therein other instances of knowledge beyond my own, communicated through this writing, and with the elimination of one or two instances, which will be found more in detail in other chapters, I here reproduce the main part of that address which was listened to by the large audience present in one of the two largest halls of the Art Institute devoted to the sittings of the World's Congress Auxiliary of the Columbian Exposition, with profound interest and attention.

As evidence of the popular interest in Psychical Research, I may here record the fact that when the Committee of the Psychical Science Congress, of which Prof. Elliott Coues was chairman, asked for a hall in the Art Institute for their Congress, President Bonney assigned them one of the many smaller halls for their meetings, thinking it would be quite large enough to accommodate all who were interested in that subject, but at the very first meeting the jam was such that the Congress had to ask for and was given a larger hall in which to hold the meeting, and the next day one of the two large halls was found necessary for the session which, though the conferences were very

long, had a large attendance from beginning to close.

THE ADDRESS.

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Psychical Science Congress :

I think it advisable to preface this account of the results of my personal experiments in automatic writing with a short statement of the mood of mind in which those experiments were begun.

There is not within the sound of my voice today one man or woman more skeptical in regard to the reality of that which is known as psychical, occult, or spiritualistic phenomena than I was for many years of my life. And my disbelief was not the result of indifference in religious matters. Nor of mere bigoted ignorance, nor of fear of ghosts or demons, nor of intellectual contempt for Spiritualism, but it was the outcome of my reason, based on the facts of materialistic science.

I came of religious ancestry; the blood of Scottish Covenanters who gave up life and lands for their religious convictions, runs in my veins, and I was brought up in the firm belief in the Christian faith and the doctrines of the Methodist church. My heart inclined to do the right and my mind early turned to thoughtful considerations of religious questions, and yet at twenty, with no companions who shared my confidence or my convictions, I had lost faith in Christianity as it had been taught me in all its hard materialism. But I longed to find the truth and I sought diligently in the region of reason and fact to find it; I was often disheartened, and though I did not deny that

in the region of the unknown the truth concerning our being and existence might be hid, I had given up all hope of light—I freely acknowledged my agnosticism.

As a child, though I thought I believed in God, the devil, heaven and hell, I was not at all given to imaginative superstitious fears concerning spirits; I was never afraid in the dark, nor of graveyards, and I had no experiences tending to encourage such fear, and as I grew older and heard my mother relate some experiences of her own, of visions and voices, I felt a lofty feeling of pity for her superstitious imaginings; later, I felt the same lofty pity for those among my friends who were Spiritualists, when they related some of their experiences, though I would not have hesitated to accept the statements of most of these in regard to any other subject. I did not even investigate, I threw aside the literature on the subject on a superficial reading with a feeling of contempt; it did not interest me; I was sure it was imagination, or partly due to some undiscovered law but mostly due to deliberate fraud. I attended no seances, interviewed no mediums. I make this statement of my state of mind and attitude toward Spiritualism, hoping those who listen to my further statements will bear this in mind.

My first experience in so-called automatic writing dates back twenty years ago or more, when planchette was all the rage. But the experiments with that, though marked by some unaccountable writings, were mainly made in company with varying groups of persons, many of them young and giddy, who looked upon the little machine not as an aid to

serious scientific inquiry, but as a sort of witch-like fortune-teller, and though planchette would write under my hands, so inconsequent, trivial and inaccurate generally were the messages given, that I soon wearied of it and threw it aside. But my very first experiment with it was a remarkable one, which I have often recalled with ever increasing mystification, when trying to account for it from the standpoint of telepathy.

In the small country village in Massachusetts which for more than thirty years was the home of my parents, a young lady had been presented with a planchette, and as she could get no writing from it, loaned it to me. At that time every morning there came to the house a blind man, a bachelor of middle age, a devout Roman Catholic whose early intention to become a priest had been frustrated by the loss of his sight. On account of his misfortune I used to read the daily news to him and relate to him anything that had occurred of interest. So I explained to him about planchette and brought it out to make trial of its powers in which I had not the slightest belief. Besides this devout Catholic there were only present my mother (an ardent Methodist) and myself. To my great surprise as soon as I placed my hands upon it, planchette began to move, then deliberately to form the letters of the name "Elizabeth." Naturally I thought this was written for me, but not recalling any dead person I knew by that name, I remembered hearing my mother speak of a sister Elizabeth of her own that had died in childhood.

With this in mind I asked who "Elizabeth" wished to communicate with, "Philip F." was

promptly written—the name of the blind man who was listening attentively. "Ask the last name," he interposed when I read this to him—"Elizabeth T." was written. "Tell Phillip I am often near him." "O, Mrs. Underwood," he exclaimed excitedly, "throw that thing away! It is of Satan—don't touch it again! Please don't." I looked at him in surprise, his face was flushed, he was shaking with emotion and his voice trembled. As soon as the name was written I remembered for the first time in years, the pretty girl of seventeen who bore it, and who died of consumption when I was about fourteen years old. Mr. F. was then a young man of about twenty. Though living in the same village, I did not then know either of them personally, nor whether they knew each other. In my mind I had never thought of either of them in relation to the other, nor thought of her at all after her death.

So I was deeply surprised when he declared in a rush of confidence, quite unlike his usual self, that he had loved this girl very dearly and her early death had been a great shock to him, though he had never before confessed that to a human being, and he felt convinced—why I could not understand—that the Evil One only could have inspired planchette with that message to himself when he had not thought of her for a long time. He would not allow me to ask any more questions for him. But to-day I fail to see in this instance the work of a subconscious self, or of thought tranference, since of those present my mother could not recall that she had ever known the girl; she had passed out of my recollection since my fifteenth year; neither

of us knew that our blind friend had any interest in her, and he had long before half forgotten her, save as a boyish fancy; and as he had deceased relatives bearing the first name, it was not until the whole name was written that the thought of her crossed his mind.

When between three and four years ago I first had access to the published proceedings of the English Society for Psychical Research, I was aroused to renewed interest in the subject. I remembered that even during the planchette period I had found that my hand could be moved to write independent of my will; so I began at various times to try if I could get definite writing. It was the usual habit of my husband and self, nearly every evening, to sit by one large table strewn with writing materials, etc., he busy with his work at one end, and I at the opposite side. It was generally at such times when he was busy writing or reading opposite me that I made my experiments silently, for I did not at first speak to him of the matter, as I knew he was opposed to the planchette business as being frivolous and leading to what he considered superstition and folly.

I thus got a number of communications signed by various names and written in different handwritings, but very soon names of people whom Mr. Underwood had known more intimately than I had, began to be written, accompanied by appeals that he should recognize them. Then I spoke to him about it, and he questioned the power that used my hand, for he saw that the handwriting was not mine and knew me well enough to be assured of my own good faith in the matter. I soon became

intensely interested in this writing, for whatever it might seem to others, to me personally who knew most surely that the words written never even crossed my brain before they appeared to my eyes, though written by my hand and pen without any effort of will of my own, the thing was marvelous. My will was only directed to keeping my hand perfectly passive, never trying to finish a word or sentence left unfinished. I was so interested that in the absence of Mr. Underwood, filled with desire to get answers to questions which had arisen in my mind to be asked this intelligence, I would try over and over again, vainly, to get this writing, but it was some time before I connected my failure with his absence. So dependent on his presence is the power to write that if in the midst of a sentence he leaves the room, the sentence is broken off. Of course I can at any time write of my own will my own thoughts.

Mr. Underwood and I have already published a few of the more striking incidents of this communication with unseen correspondents, such as information given which we both doubted when written, giving verbal and decided expression to our doubts at the time, and receiving emphatic assurance of the truth of such information through my hand, of which we afterward received unexpected confirmation. I will not here repeat the instances before published, but will briefly call attention to some later instances of knowledge outside my own consciousness.

In the article entitled "Psychic Experiences," which appeared in the *Arena* of August, 1891, and

which was sent to that magazine nearly a year previously, I quoted from a communication professedly given by Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Robert Browning, but eliminated from it a sentence which I feared might be attributed by the admirers of Robert Browning to my own predilections in favor of Mrs. Browning. When her name was written I made the remark that I felt that she was the greater poet of the two, but that her merit had been overshadowed by the wordy admiration of her husband's devotees. Immediately my hand was moved to write: "Robert Browning says you are in the right, my dear Alter Ego—I was never her equal." I did not then think that Robert Browning thus believed, and when about two years after, Mrs. Orr's Life of Browning appeared I was startled to find that during his life he had over and over again asserted her superiority as a poet to himself, as when he reproves Madam Du Quaire for giving him greater praise thus:

You are wrong—quite wrong—she has genius; I am only a painstaking fellow. Can't you imagine a clever sort of angel who plots and plans, and tries to build up something—he wants to make you see it as he sees it—shows you one point of view, carries you off to another, hammering into your head the thing he wants you to understand, and while this bother is going on God Almighty turns you off a little star? That's the difference between us. The true creative power is hers, not mine.

But I thought the sentence which followed this declaration that he was "never her equal," very like Mrs. Browning—

Robert gave me life—he gave me to Love—he

and I are but two sides of one individuality. Both of us understand this.

As I entered upon these experiments solely for my own satisfaction and now feel as if the intelligence when it can be obtained is as if from personal friends, I have no disposition or intention to use the power for the experiments of other people, so that I have not even attempted to "get communications" for the many who have asked me to do so. I am very strongly averse to so doing, but in two or three instances when my sympathies were deeply moved by the appeal of greiving hearts, I have yielded to try, but in very doubtful mood. In only two cases was I apparently successful—one has been related in Mr. Underwood's articles in the *Arena*. The second was that of a daughter very much attached to her father who before his death had been a correspondent of my husband, but we had never met father or daughter, and knew nothing of their circumstances, affairs or surroundings. The daughter wrote despairingly to Mr. U. and then to me, begging that I try to get a word in regard to her father's state because she said he was greatly attached to Mr. U.

I consented at last and held her letters near me while waiting for results. Writing came, but from "Pharos" as the individuality which during the past two or three years claims to control the sittings, names himself. Said he knew of no such person as the one named, but would try to find out, and bring word if we would sit the next evening. This we did, and it was then said that he had been found, and through Pharos gave at least a beautifully worded long message to his daughter. We

asked that if this were really the party, he would write of things which the daughter would recognize as a test of his personality. Among other things, we were told to "ask her whom she will ask to share the trust I left with her. What that trust is, she knows, and I need not specify,"—her "self sacrifice" for his sake was referred to, and she was to remember the conversations in regard to spiritual things held between the father and daughter the week before his departure and she would understand that their hopes were more than verified.

All these references were mere blind words to us, but I copied the writing and sent it on to the daughter with a feeling that it was all nonsense and guesswork. In a few days I received a joyful letter from the daughter explaining to me what the "trust" was, what the sacrifice she had made, and what the conversations were about. Of course she wanted me to try to get other communications, but that I would not do, and may as well say here that I am not in that business at all.

It may be asked why I was afraid this message might be all nonsense coming from such a source? Simply because a number of these messages have been found to be nonsense and untrue, but that fact does not lessen the marvelousness of the information given from this source which is true. When I take the writers to task for these untruthful communications I am told that it will be all made clear to me when I come over on their plane. I am sure it is not clear to me now, but then I am convinced there is still a vast store of knowledge in the Universe which I have not gained, so I am content to

seek through some rubbish for the gems which may be hidden.

For a year or so after I began to get this writing, we said nothing to even our most intimate friends in regard to it. I had a nervous horror of being considered a "medium," and besides, knew that had any of my friends told me similar experiences I should have considered them on the verge of insanity, and so I begged my husband not to mention the matter to any one while we continued our investigations. At first, too, I destroyed the sheets of paper used in these communications from fear that stray sheets covered with the scrawling writing might be recognized as "spirit writing" by any caller, but when they began to grow so interesting Mr. Underwood asked me to preserve them, and I also began to write the question as soon as the reply was written, immediately above the reply so as to keep a straight record of question and answer; our questions were always asked orally and most frequently arose from something which had been written.

Now I will explain how I came to give my experiences to the public. Very often when I expressed pleasure at some statement made as to spirit-life I was told to "share with others the information given me" and asked "when would I give to the world statements made to me as to continued existence," but I did not feel ready at my age to be branded as a lunatic, and so I paid little attention to these remarks. By and by some pleasant message would be interrupted suddenly and my hand would seem to be seized with a vigorous power as of indignation and the word "Cow-

ard" would be interpolated in a bold handwriting. As it was no unusual thing for one communication to be suddenly broken off to give place to an altogether different one (like the switching off of a telephone message) and as all sorts of unrecognized names were written, and I had heard of people whose name was "Coward," I was not sure but it was so in this case, or that some personality was conscience smitten and took this method of confessing its cowardice, especially as nothing else followed in connection. I am speaking, as you perceive, as though these communications were really spirits of deceased persons who could thus control a living hand. "Spirits" from the first they persisted in calling themselves and I could do no less in courtesy than accept their own definition. But as the word "Coward" was written often and always in this unexpected and apparently earnest way—I asked at length why that word was so often written. "Is it written as a confession or a name?" "Neither," was the reply. Then I asked, "Who is the Coward?" and the reply was written quickly, "You are, Sara."

Now, as heretofore, I had always had the courage of my convictions and been outspoken in declaring them, however unpopular. I had never thought myself lacking in courage, so I rather resented the imputation, asking wherein I was a coward. "Because you dare not speak out and confess you receive messages from us," was the reply. I did not at once express readiness to make public this fact, and "Coward" continued to be occasionally interjected in the writings, sometimes followed by the word "shame." Again

I protested, saying: "Why do you write Coward so often, intimating that you mean I am one?" "Well, we are very anxious to have the truth of soul communion established. We have done our best to awaken interest among others on your plane and meet with so little sensible appreciation," was answered. From this a discussion ensued as to the way in which we could make public the facts in the interest of psychical science, and a suggestion was made by our unseen friends, which suggestion was followed after careful deliberation on the possible outcome of such publication, but I confess with a little fear and trembling on my own part. After I expressed my readiness, "coward" was never again written.

I have spoken of "Pharos," the name given as that of the control who professes now to act as amanuensis for all who send communications to us. I did not like the idea of any one individuality doing this, but after some months when the writing was of all sorts, I began to notice that the best and most coherent messages were now in one handwriting but I gave that fact no particular thought. It will be remembered in my *Arena* article that I spoke of a friend in a distant State who wrote me, before I had told any one of my experience, of a very similar experience on her own part just developed. I took her at once into my confidence and we exchanged specimens of the writing. She thought them so similar in tone that she fancied they emanated from the same mind. She wrote me the name which had been given her as the controlling guide and wished me to ask if it

were the same as mine. I did so, and the reply was "no." I asked if there was any one in special control of the writing received by me. The answer was "yes" and the name given was Pharos. Now "Pharos" is a word so rarely used that I had never before had my attention drawn to it. It was when thus written an entirely new word to me—and like some other words used in these communications, I had to look it up in the encyclopedias and dictionary and I was delighted to find its significance was so appropriate—"a light tower." Since then, I must own that "Pharos" has become as real an individuality to me as any one of various living beings with whom I have been in correspondence for years without meeting face to face—and I think I would recognize the signature anywhere as surely as I do those of these living correspondents.

I have come to accept the common phraseology of these communications so much that I find myself mentally protesting against the word just used—"living correspondents"—as opposed to these unseen friends who have in many emphatic ways declared that they are "now more alive than ever." In speaking of those who have passed over to the great majority, I of course often used the words, "When he died," "Since his death," "When we die," etc., in my questions, but never does such use of these words pass unnoticed or unrebuked. "When he came over to our plane of life," "When he experienced the change doctors call death," "When I passed over to this phase of life," "Since his change of form," "When you come over on our

side the veil" or "mask," are some of the phrases used in speaking of what we call death.

If this writing in any obscure, unrecognized way emanates from the sub-consciousness of the only two parties concerned in it, Mr. Underwood and myself, I am at a loss to understand the tone taken toward us both. There are often statements made and opinions given of affairs and persons, diametrically opposed to our own convictions. We are personally reproved or differed from and patronizingly addressed as "children," "pupils," etc. Mr. Underwood's close criticism of vague statements was often resented. When the intelligence complained once of his being "antagonistic," he replied that he was not antagonistic, but wishing clear answers to his questions was apt to emphasize his queries. Then the following was written: "Now, friend Underwood, sink your line into the depths of your being, and see if antagonism is not your general state of intellectual consciousness?"

It is wholly unlike all I know of my own nature to accept authority submissively; then how can I believe that such counsel as the following could emanate from my own mind? This was dashed off rapidly as a good-night word—like many of the rhymed answers which are given through that source:

Child of Spirit and of Truth,
Thine must be the words of Ruth,
"Whither leads my spirit guide
With that leading I abide,"
Truth shall lead thee to our side,
Error far shall from thee hide,
Loving truth as thou hast done,
Spirit's love you will have won.

One of the strange things, to me, in this writing is the tendency the writers exhibit to give answers in rhyme—without apparent pause to search for the rhythmic word. This I could never do of my own self. What poetry I have written I have always been obliged to wait occasionally for the expressive metrical word. I cannot claim, however, for this automatic rhyme, a high degree of poetic merit.

Often when our questions seem perfectly clear to our own minds, exception is taken to the way they are put, something after this fashion: "Would you state more clearly your question," "Change your wording," "Void are some of your queries to our perceptions," "You have such a vague manner of mouthing your withinness," "Shall give you answers when questions are definitely asked." Sometimes they would offer us a substitute for the form into which we put our questions, writing "should you not ask"—the substituted form following which we often found made the reply clearer. Occasionally questions were suggested by themselves; quite early in these communications when nothing previously written led to the subject this was written: "We want you both to state what gave startling emphasis to Sara's mediumship?" At the moment we were not prepared to reply and before we had time to put into words any thoughts of our own, this followed: "Was it not communications of a higher order than those generally received from so-called spirits?" which was quite true.

There runs all through these writings constant

complaint of the limitations of our language and our bounded knowledge, which make clear explanations of the spheres to which they belong impossible. In messages purporting to come from those recently deceased, there is always an intimation of changed sense conditions which puzzled and perplexed at first, but were enjoyed when understood. One such, being asked what were his first thoughts on awakening in his new life wrote, "My first thought was violent whirl of emotion at what seemed an attempt to impose upon me. Sign language alone being presented, I could not express my perplexity, and when it dawned upon memory that when I was possessed of speech I was given to understand that what doctors call death was possible—then came the query—"if a man die shall he live again?" and was this strange state a new life? When asked, "How long was it before you grew convinced of your continued existence?" First answer was, "Cessation of your time confuses us here"; then was asked, "According to your idea how long should you think?" The reply was, "Some hours only."

Many varieties of script have appeared when my hand has held the pen, while my own commonplace penmanship does not seem capable of much modification, at any rate I have not been able to change it of my will, much less to write in reversed hand so that a mirror's aid was necessary to read it—an experience which occurred once to me. The person whose name it was, was at the time unconscious and near death, many miles away and I was not even thinking of him. Two or three times my

hand wrote words upside down, and I have never been able to write that way of my own will, nor to get such writing since.

I have been asked if during this writing I have any abnormal sensations—if I am perfectly conscious—if my hand or any portion of my system is insensible to pain at the time—if the writing exhausts me—if the thought written or the phraseology used is impressed upon my mind, etc., before it appears on paper. To which I reply:

I have no recognized "abnormal" sensations unless I should so designate the gentle thrill which announces the presence of the writing force and which comes often to me even when I am so situated that I cannot respond by trying to get writing. This descends upon the top of my head first, and if I am trying to get writing moves down through neck, shoulder and arm, into the hand holding the pen. It is, as near as I can describe it, like a gentle spray from a magnetic battery, pleasant and agreeable, never harsh or violent. Otherwise I am as normal as at this moment—alert in mind and ready to question, criticise, or enjoy and admire the bright unexpected answers given through my hand to questions propounded by Mr. Underwood or myself, mainly by Mr. U. as often these unseen friends refuse to answer my queries, unless he voices them, and their chief interest seems to center in him.

At first I often felt half-provoked at his excusing himself from further questioning on the plea of tiredness, but before long we both began to observe that if the writing continued more than

a short time it had always this effect upon him, and coupled with the fact that I can get no writing without his presence and that it had been written that the "power" was drawn from him, we could not help coming to the conclusion that the writing did exhaust him in some mysterious way. There is no insensibility of my hand or any part of my body. The words written are never previously impressed upon my mind. I follow the words with my eyes but cannot always read them at once as they are often written more rapidly than my own normal writing could be done, and there is no stopping to "dot the i's," or "cross the t's." I do that afterward in reading them over. Often as I note the first letters of a word my own thought runs on ahead and I guess the word is going to be this or that, but the intelligence which rules seems to be cognizant of my guessing and to take a perverse pleasure in twisting the words into something wholly unexpected, yet bringing the sentence into harmonious thought when finished.

Now as to the disappointments in this writing, which to some will militate against belief in the spiritual origin claimed for it. With all my experience in it I would not today venture upon any change, business venture, friendship, or line of conduct advised from this source unless my own common material sense endorsed it. Indeed, I would not take as fact any of its even reasonable advice without question, because it is not reliable as a guide in earthly affairs. Then, it is never at command of one's wish—the impediments to connected replies seem to be very great. There is

constant talk of "conditions;" but what the true, right conditions are, even those who take advantage of them when they are right, do not seem to understand. It would be amusing if it were not so pitiful to read the letters from mourning hearts which have come to me since the publication of the *Arena* articles, asking me to obtain for them such and such information, and from unnamed parties as if they thought I had the knowledge of all the spheres on tap to be drawn from at will in labeled and desired quantities at any mere request, when the truth is that it is only occasionally I can obtain it. It is not my will that controls, and I can rarely get a message from my dearest friends.

Then the assumption of great names by apparently commonplace minds is a very strange thing. I was horrified and annoyed when this occurred under my own hand because that is one of the things which disgusted me with spiritual messages before this writing came to me, as I had occasionally glanced over such messages. When I protested against such assumption I was told that "Elaine and Guinevere were not real beings but types. So somewhere in our sphere are spirits who embody cleverness in creations of their own fancy, and adopt names suited to that fancy," which I take to mean that where they aspire to become like any thinker, with whom they are in sympathy, they take the name of that ideal. There is much confusion as to names and dates in all this writing, and identifying facts are very hard to get from this source.

I have been told, mainly by friends who are

theosophists, that I do wrong to investigate and experiment in this direction, that it will lead to great evils. In regard to this advice I do as I have ever done all my life in exercising my own judgment in pursuit of truth. In my own case I may say that I have derived great pleasure, and a much wider range of knowledge from these experiments. They have made many dark and misunderstood things clear to me in a most reasonable way. I am told also that this investigation is very hurtful to health and sanity. I have been engaged in it over three years now, but only for my own satisfaction, as I would in no wise become an experimenter for others, or a subject of experiments. Though during all my earlier years I was a semi-invalid, yet my general health has never been better than during these last three or four years, but I do not ascribe that to my investigations of psychic phenomena. I do not think that has anything to do with my health in one way or another. Another threat was that it would upset my nerves. I think that I never in my life suffered less from nervousness or loss of sleep, and dreams are far less frequent with me than ever before.

I have not accepted this writing as something awesome or darkly mysterious, for I have found that thousands beside myself are possessed of this gift and other gifts far more wonderful. I think that we are at the legitimate evolutionary threshold of discovery of laws that have been forever in operation, as the laws of gravity and evolution were ever in operation before their discovery. But only through discovery and by

knowledge can we apply those laws to our own physical and spiritual well being; and I intend to learn all I can of them that is open to me.

In conclusion I quote a sentence from the great mass of writings from this source, more of which I hope sometime to publish, a sentence with which I am in full agreement:

On our side, truths of existence called supernatural, are not above nature; but are most surely in the line of orderly evolution.

CHAPTER III.

DOES SCIENCE EXPLAN THIS?

Mr. Josiah P. Mendum, publisher for many years of the Boston *Investigator*, a well-known free thought weekly paper, died at his home in Melrose, Mass., early Sunday morning, January 11, 1891. For more than twenty-five years Mr. Underwood had had business relations with him and had contributed frequently to his paper. I had met him a number of times on public occasions, but did not know him intimately, and knew little about his early life. The number of the *Investigator* following his death was dated Wednesday January 14th, and contained only a brief announcement of the event without any statement as to disease. We had known for some time of his failing health, and knowing that he was about eighty years of age attributed the cause to general decay consequent on his advanced years.

The next number of the *Investigator*, dated Wednesday, January 21st, which contained a sketch of his life, death and burial, did not reach Chicago until the afternoon of Friday, January 23d, and did not reach my hands until Saturday afternoon, and it was not until Sunday the 25th, that I found time to read the account. Mr. Underwood being absent from Chicago from the 23d till the evening of Monday, January 26th, did not see

the paper until the 27th, nearly a week from the date of its issue.

On the evening of Tuesday, January 20th, before the number of the *Investigator* dated the 21st had been sent out from the Boston office, experiencing those slight electric sensations which with me generally precede written communications, I sat down, pen in hand, to experiment, without saying anything to Mr. Underwood who was at the time lying on a sofa near by, tired, and in a drowsy mood. Neither of us was thinking of Mr. Mendum at the time, nor had we anything in relation to him in our minds. After a few meaningless words were written (a very usual occurrence at the beginning of these communications) came clearly and firmly written, "B. F. Underwood wanted." I read this to Mr. Underwood, and asked, "Who is it wants him?" "J. P. Mendum," was the reply. Then followed in the order given these oral questions and written answers :

B. F. U.—Well, if this is Mr. Mendum, what have you to tell us about your new condition ?

A.—That I am very much surprised.

B. F. U.—Do you consider it an improvement upon this life of ours?

A.—Spirit life is too new, I can't understand yet. Panorama of life goes on.

B. F. U.—What is the present state of your mind?

A.—Perplexed.

B. F. U.—Did you, while here, have any definite ideas in regard to continued existence?

A.—Only that my dear wife believed most truly that she would live on.

In regard to this statement I do not yet know whether Mrs. Mendum—who died some years before her husband, and to whom he was most deeply attached—had any belief in Spiritualism.

B. F. U.—Is there anything particular which you wish to say to us?

A.—Pleased to learn that the Underwoods were possible mediums.

B. F. U.—Doubtless you were somewhat unprepared to find yourself in a state of existence like your present one?

A.—When I first printed the *Investigator* I said I did not think Seaver, Kneeland or freethinkers generally, were on the right side, but Thomas Paine's works converted me to their opinions, and so now I am all upset.

I, at least had the impression that Mr. Mendum had been a free thinker from youth. Mr. Underwood thinks he may have known or inferred that Mr. M—was in earlier years a believer in some form of Christianity, but he did not at this point recall this or say anything to me, so it was with much surprise that I read on Sunday, the 25th of January the following corroboration of the foregoing communication, given in Chicago, Tuesday evening, January 20th:

In the summer of 1833, Mr. Mendum made the acquaintance of a young man who was a great admirer of Abner Kneeland. They became roommates and boarded together for some time. To have Mr. Mendum attend Mr. Kneeland's lectures was the ardent desire of his friend, but having formed a very bad idea of the lecturer from what Christians had said of him, and fearing to hear, lest he be convinced and the religion of his child-

hood unsettled, he preferred to keep to the old beaten road of superstition, and let others follow the path of free inquiry if they preferred. Universalism was sufficient for him, and the "delusions of Infidelity he did not care to listen to," much less to embrace them, which he feared would be the result if he gave its advocate a hearing. Thus he resisted until the kind and fatherly Abner Kneeland was prosecuted for blasphemy. Then it was that his strong sense of justice rebelled against this iniquity of established authority and his own inconsistency became apparent, in his condemnation of a man's religious opinions whose lectures he had refused to hear or read. He then as a matter of fairness resolved to give Mr. Kneeland a hearing, and the following Sunday evening found him and his friend duly seated in Julian Hall, listening to the words of the great iconoclast, whose subject was: "The Treatment of Criminals." Mr. Mendum left the hall after the meeting, feeling much enlightened by the discourse of the speaker, and although he did not at once embrace all the ideas of Mr. Kneeland, he often after this attended his meetings.....After Mr. Kneeland's release from prison, Mr. Mendum was engaged to print the *Investigator*, and when Mr. Kneeland left Boston for the West, Mr. Mendum became its publisher and Mr. Horace Seaver its editor..... The works of Thomas Paine, both in his efforts to establish the American Republic and in his attacks upon the Christian religion, challenged his admiration and created in him a true appreciation of the character of the man.

Observe the coincidence in the use of the word "print" which I should certainly have rendered "publish," yet "print" was correct.

S. A. U.—How does it happen, Mr. Mendum, that you called for Mr. Underwood since I was not

thinking of you at all? Why did you think you could be put into communication with him through me?

A.—Because I heard of him the first thing here.

B. F. U.—Have you met any old friends where you are now?

A.—No, I haven't seen any old friend.

S. A. U.—Not even your wife?

A.—Lizzie still lives.

I did not know the name of Mr. Mendum's wife who died years before him. I knew he had daughters named Lydia, Lottie and Lizzie. I had a faint impression that her name was Lydia, and as the foregoing was written, so stated to Mr. Underwood. He said he did not remember that he ever knew her first name. I remarked that perhaps the knowledge that she had a daughter Lizzie might have caused this name to be written, or perhaps the communicating intelligence got the daughter's name instead of that of the wife. I did not know until the *Investigator* of the 21st was received, several days later, that Mrs. Mendum's name was Elizabeth, and don't now know whether in life he addressed or spoke of her as "Lizzie," or Elizabeth. In regard to this point I quote the *Investigator:*

In October, 1847, Mr. Mendum was married in New York to Miss Elizabeth Munn, of that city, a lady of pronounced liberal ideas.

B. F. U.—Now then, Mr. Mendum, if these answers really come from you, I wish to ask you a question.

S. A. U.—Wait—something is being written.

What followed was in regard to some private matters of no importance in this public statement, but such as might very well be borne in mind by the person represented to be in communication with us. When this was finished, Mr. U. still having his question in mind reverted to it, as follows :

Q.—If this is really Mr. Mendum, can you tell us of what disease you died ?

I was greatly surprised at such a question and protested that as we both knew he died from old age it was senseless to ask it ; but Mr. U. said he had a reason for asking which he would not tell me then, and repeated : "Can the intelligence writing tell us of what disease Mr. M. died ?"

A little unwillingly I held my hand passive while he asked the question, feeling quite sure if any reply was given it would be in accordance with my own opinion—and the first answer did not surprise me. It was : "Don't know," written slowly as if considering. I read it aloud with a half smile as proving that I was right, but to my mystification Mr. U. did not seem satisfied and said : "Surely you can remember from what disease you suffered while here ?" Then the word "ulcer" was plainly written. I thought this nonsense, and was surprised to see that Mr. U. seemed much interested, and continued :

Q.—I want Mr. Mendum to state in what part of his body the ulcer was ?

I still held the pen in the position where it stopped after writing the word "ulcer" and now

it moved on, writing rapidly and clearly "of stomach," making the answer read "Ulcer of stomach."

Then Mr. U. said: "Well, that is remarkable—for just before leaving the office to-night I happened to come across a short notice of Mr. Mendum's death in some Boston paper—I think it was '*The Banner of Light*'—which stated that he died from cancer of the stomach—and the terms 'ulcer' and 'cancer' being often ignorantly used interchangeably it greatly surprised me when you, who knew nothing whatever of the cause of his death, wrote the word 'ulcer'—and now I am still more astonished when the precise location of the disease is given."

Just then the pen in my hand wrote: "Cancer —some said."

The following day, Wednesday, January 21st, Mr. Underwood tried to find the paper in which "Cancer of the stomach" was given as the cause of Mr. Mendum's death, but could not. He was called out of the city Friday, the 23rd, and did not return until the evening of the 26th; but on Sunday the 25th, I found in the *Investigator* of the 21st the following:

Cancer of the stomach was the disease, according to the physician's certificate, from which he died. But the taper had burned to its close, and his eighty years of toil had so ripened his life that he dropped into the dreamless sleep quietly and as naturally as the engine stops when the machinery wears out.

Will thought-transference, hypnotism, or sub-

consciousness or the subliminal self account for all the statements in the communications given, which so closely tallied with the *Investigator's* account, not then sent out from the printing press? My own mind was making vigorous protest, whilst it was being written against the answer which was thus given in regard to the disease from which Mr. Mendum died. I was, I will add, entirely normal in mind and thought while the messages were written through my hand by the invisible intelligence, and I felt deeply averse to being made the medium of private personal matters in which I had no interest.

Then in regard to the word "ulcer" being written when Mr. U. had the word "cancer" in his mind, and I had not the remotest thought of either word. Does thought-transference explain that change of word? It seems to me rather that a third intermediary mind must be admitted to whom the word "ulcer" might have suggested itself as equivalent or akin to cancer.

As I have since come to know that Mr. Mendum's son, the present publisher of the *Investigator*, was the writer of the sketch of his father's life which appeared in the *Investigator* of January 21st, 1891 —a person with whom I had no intimate acquaintance, I cannot understand how my mind could be put into unconscious communication with his at a distance of over a thousand miles, so that the purport of several parts of that sketch could be written by my hand at least four days before I read it in the *Investigator*.

Another instance of knowledge possessed by the

intelligence using my hand outside of our own, was given by Mr. Underwood in an article published in the *Arena* of June, 1892, which I here reproduce in his own words :

"In other cases the writing contained evidence of knowledge that Mrs. Underwood never could have obtained in any other way. She gave one or two instances in the August *Arena*. I will relate another of her experiences, which, in my opinion, proves that there are supernormal methods of obtaining knowledge.

"One morning, a message purporting to be from a young man recently deceased, was received. Neither Mrs. U. nor I had ever seen his handwriting. We knew his name only as William S. The message was signed "Z. W. S." At the time, I remarked that I did not believe there was any Z in his name, and in this opinion Mrs. U. concurred. A few days afterwards we met the father and the mother of the young man, who were so impressed with the resemblance between the handwriting and that of their son that they wished to take the writing with them. There was a Z in the name, but it was the initial of his second name, and not of the first, as it was written. In the presence of the young man's mother, Mrs. U.'s hand was moved to write, and the lady asked if her father would give a test by writing his name. The first name, Solomon, was written slowly; and after a pause, the surname was written very quickly. Mrs. U. did not know and never had known the name, which was written correctly; and Mr. S., who is a lawyer and a man of critical and discrimi-

nating mind, and his wife, both declared that the signature closely resembled that of the old gentleman. Some days ago I wrote to Mr. S. asking him whether, after further reflection, he could suggest a possible explanation of what Mrs. U. wrote, without recourse to any occult theory. He replied and referred to the message purporting to be from his son, thus :

'I have compared it with the signatures of our boy. As I told you in Chicago at the time, the writing bears a very strong resemblance to his writing. Mrs. U. did not, in my opinion, either consciously or unconsciously, have any knowledge of Will's full name. The writing, while quite similar to Will's, is very different from Mrs. Underwood's. My wife's father's name had not been mentioned at all. Never had been in Mrs. U.'s presence. I don't think she had ever met a member of Mrs. S.'s family by that name, yet she certainly wrote the name of Mrs. S.'s father, Solomon M., very plainly, when asked to write the name of the person who had just written that he had something to say. This writing was also very, very similar to the handwriting of the old gentleman.

'The test, to my mind, was quite convincing—more so than almost anything I ever saw; yet I have no fixed or positive opinion as to how it was done. Still, I must, in justice to my own intelligence, record myself as against the theory of sub-conscious action on the part of Mrs. U. on the ground that she never knew, consciously or otherwise, enough on the subject to write what she did.

'Telepathy might apply to Mrs. S.'s father's name because she was thinking strongly of him at the time; still, the theory, in my opinion, falls very far below what I would call proof of telepathy,

though I am quite a believer in telepathy as an established fact.'"

I may pertinently give as the conclusion of this chapter where I have given the experiences concerning the publisher of the Boston *Investigator*, a materialistic weekly paper, a somewhat convincing automatic communication purporting to come from that publisher's long time co-worker and intimate friend, Horace Seaver, editor for many years of the *Investigator* who passed from earth a year or two previous to Mr Mendum's demise.

To show the frequent lack of sequence of thought or purpose between varying communications I will here give the questions and answers preceding the one from Mr. Seaver. The answers to these were written in a free, flowing business hand. Apropos of something we had been reading, we asked the following:

Question.—From your point of view is suicide under any circumstances, even the most harassing, advisable or right?

Answer.—Long ago, philosophers asked this question. Don't you see that as we are placed, an affirmtive answer would not do?

Q.—But you know that the hardships of this world often become so seemingly unbearable to sensitive souls that suicide to such seems the only gateway of relief?

A.—Never fear what may happen on earth. This sphere corrects many mistakes on yours, but is far from perfect.

With our minds on this subject, now ensued a little pause, when the pen began to move again,

but the style of the writing was changed—a fair imitation of *printed* letters formed into the words, "I still live—Horace Seaver." The quotation from Webster is characteristic, as in conversation and public speaking, Mr. Seaver was fond of quoting from distinguished sources.

B. F. U.—Is this really Mr. Seaver?
A.—Yes, Benjamin.

While Mr. U. was never addressed by his family, friends or myself by his first name, but by the diminutive of his second, Mr. Seaver who had known Mr. U. from his eighteenth year, in the earlier years of acquaintance used to address him as "Benjamin."

After a few other questions and answers it was asked, What were your first sensations in your new life?
A.—Was rather surprised. This is wonderful—and very pleasant.

The characteristic thing in this communication is this: It was all written in imitation of printed letters, in which I am not an adept; and it was not until after a little thought that the purport of this as a test of personality occurred to me. Some years before his transition from earth Mr. Seaver, in saving a little child from danger in a run-away accident, hurt his right hand so that it was more or less painful ever after to write with that hand. So though he occasionally wrote letters to his friends, he grew into the habit, being a practical printer as well as editor, of setting up his editorials in type to save the pain of writing

them with his maimed hand. Now I would never have thought of his maimed hand but for this incident of the printed answers, which struck me as being an odd freak.

CHAPTER IV.

CONDITIONS AND SENSE LIMITATIONS.

The many who know of automatic writing and other forms of spirit communication only by hearsay or what has been published as from an unseen source, often get very wrong ideas into their heads as to the power possessed by so-called mediums. Apparently they think that communication once established, the medium has only thereafter to turn on the faucet whenever and wherever such medium chooses to do so, and drain from the spirit world reservoir an immediate and unlimited supply of information in regard to any subject, from the most trivial and useless personal matter to the greatest and most sublime secrets of the Universe. This erroneous notion of unthinking minds is one of the great drawbacks to popular belief in the truth of spirit communication—a drawback which has its origin in ignorance.

In truth while there are many not yet understood difficulties in the way of free communication, two of the chief hindrances are over and over again referred to by our correspondents on the other side, as every true medium is aware, and these are the lack of proper "conditions" or the understanding of what they are, on one side or the other, and the limitation of our sense perceptions in regard to differently conditioned modes of being. So I purpose in this chapter to present a

few of the thoughts given through automatic writing in regard to these two hindrances.

From the first coherent communications received from this source there has been frequent reference to conditions that they were "not right," that they were "better than usual," etc. As I had little knowledge of Spiritualism when I began my investigations these phrases with many others, were all new to me.

On one of the evenings that I sat down to write Mr. U. was busy with his work at the opposite side of the table. Complaint was made that they would prefer "a warmer greeting from B. F. U." I remarked that I was ready and willing to communicate. "Your individual"—so much was written, then ensued a long stop.

Q.—Why not go on?
A.—We are not strong enough to do with your aid alone.
Q.—Why?
A.—Blended powers are of greatest use to us.

On another occasion when he was occupied and I did not wish to interrupt him, was written:

We wish B. F. U. would give us his attention—don't mean to annoy, but we have our conditions and want his willing attention.

When there arose a little difference of opinion between Mr. U. and myself as to the meaning of certain phrases written, I emphasized my own views with some force. When I took my pen again, expecting something entirely different, in answer to a question having no reference to our

dispute—which had quickly passed out of my mind—I got instead of the expected answer, this :

Want you two to be in sweet accord, otherwise we cannot give you the best and highest which waits for such as you when in more harmony.

Now the question is did my subconscious self thus gently rebuke me when my conscious self had not the least thought of having been in the wrong? Once when Mr. U. rather sharply criticised some statements made, the same tone of gentle reminder was used thus :

Brother, your intention is all right, but your antagonistic attitude challenges disputation. Your spirit is not one of lovingness, and Love is the essence of Being.

Now, though my hand wrote thus, I personally had not thought that Mr. U. had shown much antagonism in his criticism.

Very frequently when I asked a question no direct reply to me would be given, but an intimation made that if Mr. U. would ask, the answer would be forthcoming. This vexed me sometimes and I asked why less attention was paid to my questions than to his. The reply was :

We are as good friends to you as to your husband, but we are obliged to go along in the way we are going, because we cannot break the laws which govern intercourse between your phase of existence and ours.

Harmony of minds was frequently intimated to be an indispensable condition in such sentences as these :

Earthly jars are arrows sent against higher spiritual aspirations. Sympathies and antipathies are stronger here than with you, for here we separate the wheat from the chaff. Changed conditions make new relations.

When asked how they knew when they could best reach us, the reply was,

Placed as we are, we wait with spiritual vision your hours of leisure when we can come into rapport with you.

Once when Mr. U. was very tired and said he could not in consequence give attention to the writing, the pen immediately wrote :

Your condition of exhaustion is most unfavorable, and the note of dissent makes rapport still harder.

He then remarked that he was not unwilling to give time when he had it to spare, and was not too tired. On which this very polite reply was penned :

Thanks, dear partner, for the suave explanation —zealous as we are, we are often perforce of some adverse environment obliged to delay communication with you.

When some message was given in regard to whose meaning we were in doubt, they wrote :

Lessons given from our side cannot be easily understood when the perfect conditions of mediumship are not determined on your side, or ours.

We discussed once the propriety of asking a mediumistic acquaintance to sit with us and see what the result might be, asking the question of our unseen friends :

A.—Wait. It is always best to test even mediumistic persons since their control and yours may be on very different planes, and belong to altogether different spheres. You do not on your plane wish to take into your confidence every one who professes to think and believe as they think you do.

I think there is a very excellent thought in the wording, "Every one who professes to think and believe as they think you do," a thought which struck me with its truth, as I read what was certainly not in my own mind.

When we asked certain questions regarding their mode of life, etc., and only vague and evasive answers were given I said I thought it rather cowardly on their part to avoid giving us straightforward answers—to which this reply was made :

Cowardly or not, we have got to obey conditions the same as you have.

And again,

Seals are set as to some of your questions. Conditions are so different you could not understand straightforward answers to the questions just asked.

Another time was written,

Dear ones you are in the right path but you must understand what obstacles are in the way because of the limitations of your environment.

At the beginning of these communications when many different individualities with widely varying chirography, seemed after a fashion to contend for the guiding of my pen, not infrequently statements were written which we suspected, and in two or

three instances found to be untrue; and disliking this I asked,

Why are falsehoods told us when you know that we here are seeking to know the truth in regard to you and your spheres?

A.—Can you always give pleasing explanations of the wrong things which you are doing on your plane? Do you suppose we jump from imperfection to perfection by the accident of change from one sphere to another? You, who profess and wish to be sensible, should take into account the inherent weakness sure to show itself on this plane which is not the plane of perfection, but a phase of Being.

To a somewhat like question the answer was:

A.—Mankind are so much in the dark and we, while willing and anxious to enlighten you, are so hampered by our conditions, that we are obliged to seem obscure and mendacious when really we are not.

When we asked some questions in regard to future states of existence:

A.—You ask questions which are not to be answered to those on your plane, wait—primary scholars cannot expect to understand the questions asked of graduates.

Q.—We should think you would be as anxious to answer the questions which so perplex us here, as we are to learn the things of which we are now ignorant?

A.—Yes, we are as anxious to reply openly to your queries, as you are to have us do so. But there are laws on all planes of being which must be observed, and we are still under bondage to law.

Q.—Do you mean that you are forbidden to give answers to questions on certain subjects, when we ask such?

A.—Bondage to sensual perceptions makes it difficult to explain matters which are simple truths to us. But your anxiety to learn the truth makes us desirous to teach you so far as the difference of conditions between your plane and ours will allow.

Q.—Will it be of service to persist in our search for future light on these subjects ?

A.—Those who have advanced as far as you have advanced will grow in esoteric knowledge in spite of hard conditions.

At various times statements akin to the following were made :

Physical exhaustion deters spirit communion. Your physical, but oftener your spiritual state works against true rapport.

Sour-minded spirits have hindered free communication.

We are in our sphere as limited as you in yours, but we are a step beyond man's position.

When it was asked why certain physical manifestations said to be common did not occur in my investigations, this was given :

A.—You do not yet understand that beyond your sphere are many planes, and from these planes come words and works to those on earth who are educated by environments and conditions to understand the plane from which communications are given.

Q.—Will the influence exercised in this way of communication tend to affect us injuriously?

A.—No. Perhaps it may for the hour cause a state of nervousness, but on the whole it is of physical benefit.

Q.—What is one of the principal right conditions for communication ?

A.—Clan conditions—clan means those in the same trend of intellectual development—conditions are as mysterious to us as to you; we have to learn by experiments as you do. We have found that where we can get in rapport with a soul in sympathy with truth we can best express ourselves.

That a great deal of their work in trying to get into communication was mainly experimental, the earlier pages of the writing obtained through my hand gave evidence in the many unfinished and fragmentary messages, or attemps at such. My own wish to have them written out complete availed nothing. I give an instance; after a coherent communication of some sort was finished, my pen wrote:

Clever and clear-headed man wants—ask woman —Wana—Wana was born—he was as you are—man wise (a long pause)—can't—gone.

Q.—Now why can't he write clearly what he wishes to tell us, if as you say he is clever and clear-headed?

A.—Clear-headed, but cannot make will work—Wana is one of the true—

A scrawl here followed and no more coherent writing, spite of all invitation to finish.

Another time the writing was interrupted and when I asked why, the answer was given: "Woman all around." "Who is the woman?" I questioned. "Roman type of woman here tonight." "What is her name?" "Fulvia." I tried to question "Fulvia," but the writing went off into incoherent scrawls, then suddenly was written:

Cometh here a warrior bold,
Charlemagne of times of old,
Slave of times when class was king.
King of men in everything,

This verse was followed by the words, "Roman type of woman—strong to do and dare."

Now who can explain such mixed writing when I was personally desirous of replies to definite questions which I had in mind, and was never consciously interested in any woman in history named Fulvia.

After making an engagement for a sitting at a future time of their own choosing, this was written:

Save your power of spiritual friendliness for the occasion and we will give powerful tests.

Q.—How can we save power?

A.—By some previous care of temper—Let not emotion of any sort control your spirit. Be guided by our higher desires and aspirations, let us for once fully control.

Q.—Why do you demand this? We do not intend to subjugate our own individuality to any power, spirit or other.

A.—Spiritual longing, you should understand, sometimes takes the form of command. Forgive, if in our great interest we forget that you too, are spirits also, though undeveloped.

Even recently the opening sentence written at a sitting was, "Come willingly to us, or we cannot give you communications."

Q.—What is the reason for your coming to-night?

A.—Good power, and good friends.

Once we asked,

When those on our plane pass from earth, what are the most favorable conditions by which they may be enabled to communicate with us?

A.—Conditions are here determined by so many

laws which to you are unintelligible that we are unable to answer your query.

Q.—Could you give us a symbolic hint?

A.—Change of environments are as sure to change relations here, as with you.

Akin to these remarks as to "conditions" have been the frequent statements as to the limitations of sense perceptions which render it so difficult for our spirit friends to make us understand spirit life and its possibilities. From many such complaints I offer the following samples in reply to our insistence upon definite information.

Q.—Can you describe something of your sphere?

A.—Words, as you know, are inadequate to present clearly pictures of the things most familiar to sense perceptions. How then can we paragraph to your limited knowledge wonders beyond our power to describe or comprehend?

Q.—Can you give a hint as to what the most marked differences between what your ideas were while here as to spirit existence and the reality as you now know it?

A.—Void are words bounded by earthly meanings to answer your query. Sense perceptions are on so much lower a plane of spirituality that no words within your knowledge could convey definite ideas of spirit existence.

When we complained that we could not understand a certain statement given, the reply was "Verities don't depend on atomistic understanding." "Atoms of Being" is a phrase often used by these writers to indicate human beings.

Q.—Can you not give some description of life where you are?

A.—Spirit-world means more than your thought can reach. Those studying the A B C of life cannot expect to understand the X of algebra.

Q.—Are you as happy in your present state as when on our plane?

A.—Told as a wonderful dream of poet or seer I should have thought this phase of existence a phantasm too beautiful for realization, but living this new, sweet, helpful life, I am constantly wondering if I am a real part of this sphere.

Q.—Can you give us an idea as to the locality of your sphere?

A.—There are no words in your language which we here can make useful. Verbal modes of expresssion are inadequate to express that of which there is no equivalent on your plane.

Q.—Why are so many vague answers given to our questions?

A.—Soul forces are so unlike what you on your merely physical plane can imagine that we must remain under ban, and answer——

Again,

You will find when you come to our sphere that human reason is so far limited that it is far from infallible—that many links apparent here are missing from your patched chain.

Q.—Why not give more definite answers?

A.—X means the unknown quantity. We here have our X's which we cannot explain to you in your present environment. Oh these demands for the explicit and statistical! they are all out of our sphere. * * * Z and X explain much in mathematics, but suppose you explain Z and X?

Again,

Ah, how foolish to philosophize on questions of future life when your environments are so full of merely physical masters—Bounds of Physical cannot word Spiritual.

Mind and Matter are but names which express man's ignorance of wonders unknown to his condition and needs.

Once when several messages had been begun but left unfinished, we remarked playfully that we guessed our friends on the other side must be a little insane that evening. Then was written :

Rational as you are, but how are we to say to you so you can understand—things—matters—outside—beyond your bounds of sense perceptions? Can you indicate a code of signals which will interpret what you are not receptive of?

Again when we found fault with their vague replies, was written: Wonder what you will accomplish when you get over here and understand all the obstacles in the way?

Q.—Can you give us any clear idea of your new condition?

A.—Pharos says your query cannot be answered on your plane. More spiritual insight, a broader view of Being, and a change of environment are necessary to such knowledge. Sometime you will understand.

We said of some guarded reply to a philosophical question that it was not a satisfactory answer, to which was returned—

Years of inquiry make us wary of answering offhand the careful queries of earnest thinkers like you. One step in advance of you, we begin to understand the limitations of planes, and don't venture to ask high grade questions of neophites.

Once when Mr. U. found fault with one of our unseen communicants for indirectness, this was written,

Charitable as B. F. U. is to his needy fellow-beings, his charity does not seem to extend so strongly to those of his own ilk who have passed on to a higher phase of being. We wish he would think of us as he would—as he does—of those on his own plane who do the best they know how.

B. F. U.—Yes, but the fact that you are on a higher plane causes me to expect more direct answers from you than from our more fallible friends on the earth plane?

A.—Fallible is the word. Thou shalt better understand the fallibility of spiritual Being on its onward way to development when you have reached our round of Being's ladder. Infallibility belongs only to the higher evolution of Spirit. When ye shall come into true spiritual harmony with our sphere many of your earnest queries will be most easily answered, but your environments make our answers now enigmatical.

So all through these communications the fact of our sense limitation is constantly shown to stand in the way of much desired knowledge. Even in the rythmic answers the same thing is repeated, as for instance in the following:

Harmonious are our souls with yours
Dear earthly pupils. Life endures
Through many spheres where earthly shows
Are shown to be but shams of those
Most truly proved to be the real
Within the spheres you call ideal,
But which are proved by Death's ordeal
To be of true life sign and seal.
To Sara and to Bhama prove
We thus that soul and life are love,
And when you reach our high estate
We may more clearly and more straight
Make you know this.—Till then we wait.

I have given here their own explanations as to these hindrances to definite statements, as well as

to command of communication at will of the mediums on either side of the veil. Sometimes, it must be remembered, our earthly telephones get out of order too, if conditions are not right. I have made this explanation before offering selections from the mass of writings containing such descriptions or hints of the spirit world as they have been able to give in spite of these limitations.

In addition to such limitations it is often intimated that there are laws in spheres beyond this, forbidding information on certain points in regard to which as they quaintly phrase it "Bars are set." Once when we inquired as to the further progress of spirits in higher spheres of spiritual evolution the reply was :

Souls of those born of our spiritual travail—Can you not understand how deep our interest in you may be, though we are debarred by law beyond your ken of giving you hints of your kinship to higher phases of life !

Again one wrote as follows, addressing Mr. U. in answer to some question :

Esteemed sir ; good souls are now oh so anxious to get into communication with your plane, but the laws of spirit existence are hard to break through.

Q.—Can you not in accordance with spiritual law yet communicate with us ?

This was written with apparent difficulty by one new to controlling the hand :

A.—No mortal can understand the laws governing our plane, yet we know communication is possible. Long ago this was demonstrated, but the sure law is not yet given to us. We work mainly in the dark.

It must be remembered also that different communications were received purporting to come from differing spheres of intelligence, and the above was apparently from someone not very familiar with the different methods of communication between his sphere and ours.

CHAPTER V.

ANALOGIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SPIRIT LIFE AND EARTH LIFE.

Naturally our curiosity was awakened by reason of this source of information in regard to the mode of existence in the spheres said to be the homes of our communicants, and frequently we asked questions on various points in this line of inquiry. In this chapter I shall give some of the answers received. The terms "sphere," "plane," "phase of being," "round of being's ladder," etc., were most frequently used to indicate both the spirit's place of existence and ours.

As to location of Spirit-world, such answers as the following could only be obtained:

Space has no real dimensions. Your sense perceptions bounded by your relations to so-called matter, cause you to make arbitrary lines which have no real existence, but on your plane it is the nearest you can come to the reality of things. When you step over within our lines you thinkers will wonder at your blindness, but you are not to blame. You long for truth—that is the main thing.

When we asked for information regarding certain friends who had passed over, we were frequently given evasive answers and once when this occurred I said:

Q.—Do tell us something definite, or explain why you cannot do so!

A.—Soul states depend on spiritual laws which your material environments do not and cannot explain. You ask us to give you in a word explanations far beyond your powers of comprehension and beyond our stage of expression to give.

Q.—Do you mean by what you have just written, to say that you know nothing about the present state of our friend?

A.—There are millions of spirits who occupy many varying planes. Those who are new comers are not always known to spiritual planes on which their thought, sympathies, longings, and aims have no place. Your friend is not on our spirit plane—bounded are sense-perceptions as to our possibilities.

Q.—Is spirit-life as you now understand it, an improvement on earth-life?

A.—Ephemeral phases of life such as you are now undergoing are never satisfactory.

Q.—Why?

A.—Because as undeveloped beings you cannot understand the processes of spirit evolution, and are constantly mistaking a phase for the whole of being.

Q.—Don't spirits reflect the medium's own ideas?

A.—Spirits only act through those in sympathy with their own ideals, and the medium reflects the feelings of the spirit—the spirit does not reflect the medium's thought except so far as both are in unison.

Q.—Do spirits influence their mediums to think and believe as the controls do?

A.—Those on the plane from which comes your connecting spiritual force have no influence—desire none—upon their mediums. Spirit and medium are spiritually sympathetic before communication can be established. Souls here are always in sympathetic accord with all who are in

sympathy with our planes whatever the difference between our views on subjects.

Q.—How many upward steps—comparatively—must we on our plane take before we progress far enough in knowledge to clearly comprehend what you have just stated?

A.—Upward steps depend on souls. Spirit progress is possible in all planes. But of course, with change of form and planes the progress, becomes more and more easy; but the desire to grow in knowledge and lovingness is not hampered on any plane.

Though I personally had no preconceived ideas in relation to higher or lower spheres of existence, yet not infrequently hints of such divisions among spirits were given as when we asked the question given below:

Q.—Will you tell us what is the normal craving of spiritual life?

A.—We teach that spiritual life has many differentiated cravings.

Q.—Will you state some of these in their graded order?

A.—Zones of spirit life overlap and intertwine often.

Q.—Take the case of an unthinking and not highly moral or intellectual soul who yet accepts as true the common orthodox belief which he only dimly understands. Can you tell us what the aims of such an one would be when reaching the next phase of life's experience?

A.—Such souls are rarely found within our sphere.

Q.—But don't you know what their first experience is?

A.—Thou sayst rightly—we know.

Q.—Do you then object to answer?

A.—There are certain facts of spiritual existence which B. will try to hint.

Q.—Are those facts unpleasant ones ?

A.—There is a sphere in spirit life allotted to those who leave the earthly plane in spiritual ignorance, which is not pleasing to dwell upon, yet which is absolutely necessary to spiritual soul growth, and within that plane those leaving your sphere greet all those of like minds.

Sometimes there was difficulty in getting messages, *i. e.*, many were begun but were not finished. Apparently new-comers interfered in the writing. When we asked for the explanation of this, the following replies were received :

A.—Spirits present are of such grades that Pharos would rather not say why no questions will be answered.

B. F. U.—Can you not state more clearly why the questions asked cannot be answered ?

A.—Souls of those who fancied themselves on Bhama's plane because of his generosity, are now here with all sorts of hindrances to true spirit union.

Q.—Can we help overcome those hindrances, and how ?

A.—Share with these poverty-stricken spirits, thoughts of true spiritual soul communion, and raise them by force of sympathy toward all that they are able to comprehend. In course of time such sense-bound souls will attain a higher standard of morals, and leaving sense behind, will become what all germs of spiritual growth should be.

Q.—Is it true then that evil and good spirits are both as active in your spheres as in ours ?

A.—Spirit spheres are far more defined than with you. So we who are on the higher planes

always guard so far as we can our proteges against the shallow souls of lower planes.

Once we asked in relation to children's education—

Q.—Will you tell us something in regard to the life of children on your plane ?

A.—Children in spirit life are more happily environed than in earth life. Children are free from the trammels of selfishness and dogmatic limitation, so they here grow up freely in one of the lower spheres where are those best fitted to help their advance by reason of lovingness.

Q.—Have you schools there, something like ours ?

A.—Spiritual schools are here more perfectly adapted to the harmonious development of souls than on your plane.

Q.—Shall those who have inherited evil appetites, passions, or proclivities which they spiritually abhor, but have not strength of will to wholly overcome here, be obliged to do penance for such weaknesses when they come over to your side, or will such weaknesses be dropped with the physical form ?

A.—Appetites belong to the planes where they emanate. If those appetites and proclivities are detested and protested against by those who inherit them, they may be forgotten and obliterated in new environments.

Q.—Does evolution continue on your plane ?

A.—Evolution is the Law of Life. Beginnings are often really endings of one phase of existence. You know so little ! There is much which as yet is hard for you to understand ; Wait—Search—Study.

Q.—What becomes of the millions of beings who have lived on and passed away from this earth?

A.—We here are not able to answer truly your

searching question. Remember we are on a plane near to yours, and one by no means near soul-knowledge. What you ask we wonder over also. Brother, when you come to our plane we will be glad of your help.

Q—Are there multitudes on your plane now discarnate beings, who once lived in the flesh on our earth?

A.—There are thousands of planes of spirit life. On each of these exist those from your sphere who have advanced to those spheres where sympathetic comradeship would be appreciated.

Q.—Are there modes of communication between these different spheres?

A.—Communication depends upon soul-sympathies.

Q.—Is there communication between all the spheres?

A.—There are soul sympathies between some of these spheres. There rolls a vast ocean of distance between others.

Another time was written:

We are greatly in advance of your plane, yet beyond our sphere lies Spiritual potencies far above our limit.

At different times we asked various questions pertaining to the new life and among them the following.

Q.—From your standpoint, do you consider death the end of conscious existence?

A.—Death, we know only as a phrase used to indicate change of environment.

Q.—Is death expected on your plane, as on ours, or do you all understand that the next change is progress?

A.—Slow even are those on our plane to understand the law of unending evolution.

Q.—When one enters into your sphere—when we are called dead—is there at first a period of unconsciousness, or is there an unbroken consciousness, a remembrance of what has transpired?

A.—When what you call death occurs—which is really a new birth—unconsciousness is the stage of transition; but, as soon as the new-born spirit is found strong enough to understand the very natural change which has taken place—a change which, if he or she has been an observer of the thousands of metamorphoses occuring in earth life with lower forms, will seem the most natural possible in evolution—then the knowledge of such change dawns upon the sense-perceptions, and all becomes clear.

When writing purporting to come from one recently passed over was given and we asked how he knew of us, this was the reply:

A.—States of consciousness here are so different from what you know, that I may not explain to you how I knew as soon as I gained conscious existence that you two could commmunicate with me.

Almost invariably when one recently deceased claimed to be communicating, there was mention made of the transition period being one of unconsciousness and of consequent weakness and inability to think clearly, "Pharos" the control, acting as amanuensis. Once, when I deplored the physical pangs consequent upon the separation of the spirit from the body, came the answer,

'Strange may seem soul-life to all
Whose knowledge-bounds within the wall
Of sense are held by laws, which pain,
Born of love, shall burst again:'

The foregoing is a reply which may well be pondered over, for it is full of comforting assurance.

Q.—How long in our time is it before a spirit passed from our plane to yours comes to consciousness?

A.—When born into Spirit-life the period of what is akin to mind growth on your plane varies according to previous conditions of heredity as with children—so we cannot predict.

Q.—Do you in your sphere require any sort of food or nourishment to supply waste of force, as we require for the upbuilding of our bodies?

A.—Spirit comes not by outward accretion, but proceeds to develop from within.

Q.—Can you make that answer more clear to our perception?

A.—Show you that each process of evolution whether spiritual or physical depends upon the germinating power within it.

Q.—Can you indicate from whence comes that germinating power.

A.—Sense knowledge is so undeveloped so far as spiritual workings are given in your sphere, that no definite answer can be given, but when you understand all the forces which are at work from the formation of an acorn to an oak, we will then clearly explain the evolutionary processes of spirit arising from your sense plane.

Q.—Do you in your spheres have one language, or what corresponds therewith, or many as we here have?

A.—Spiritual language does not correspond with your vague ideas, but we will try to give you symbolically an idea of language as we know it. Spirit language means only Thought, a word coined by man to express something inexpressible to those on your static knowledge; so all languages are but symbolic parts of spirit speech, and virtually we

have but one language, which includes all which you have differentiated. Your languages are dialects only.

Q.—Do you have habitations distinct and separate from others—like our homes here?

A.—What are your homes—give us some idea of what you mean.

Q.—Home to us means the private refuge of congenial minds.

A.—Thou sayest well—then do we spirits more than you have real homes.

Q.—Explain more fully what you mean.

A.—Spiritual soul relationship goes deeper and is pointedly superior to mere blood relationship as ye shall understand when your sense conditions are of no further use.

Q,—Do you have any need of what we call apparel—clothes?

A.—Choose ye what apparel shall be yours. Thou shouldst understand that in the spirit-world clothing typifies the state of those who choose their raiment. Our friend who gave the world our thought in Sartor Resartus spoke better than he knew in saying clothes signify humanity.

Q.—Can you tell us what your methods of locomotion are?

A.—Travel with us depends on the need or desire.

Q.—Then you do go from place to place?

A.—Oh, yes, and with more rapidity than is possible on your planet.

Q.—What can you tell us as to the locality of your sphere?

A.—There are no words in your language which we can make useful. Verbal words of expression are inadequate to express that of which there is no equivalent on your plane.

Q.—Do you have your hours of sleep there?

A.—Sleep, as you understand it, is unknown to us.

Q.—Have you greater opportunities there for study and learning than when here?

A.—Knowledge here is on an altogether different basis than with you, but we have delightful opportunities and wealth of spiritual roadway.

Q.—Do you on your plane have anything analogous to our idea of individual ownership of property, or is not your plane rather on the line of ownership of properties—qualities?

A.—Thou art right. There is on soul planes no cognition of selfish ownership of anything spiritual; spirits are of right owners of all good, but temporal earthly goods are here accounted buzzards' prey.

Q.—What is the personal possession of one individual spirit in distinction from the possessions of other spirits?

A.—Spiritual possessions are always marked by boundless desire to make those possessions the common property of all.

Q.—What then is the greatest good or possession of spirit life?

A.—Shall we now repeat what so often thou hast been told?

Q.—If necessary, yes.

A.—Self must be submerged. Jesus said: "Do unto others as thou would'st be done by."

Q.—On your plane does any one own what we call personal property?

A.—None of tradesman sort.

Q.—What marks individual belongings on your side?

A.—Craving personal belongings is characteristic of your earthly experience.

Q.—Do all on leaving this plane lose all desire for individual property?

A.—Thou should'st ask—Are all who leave your phase of existence endowed with sufficient knowledge of spiritual brotherhood to commence with

those spirits who are far in advance of untried souls, to overcome selfish—that is earthly—greed?

As we considered this sufficient answer we let it go at that. To an intimation of their loving interest in mankind we rejoined:

Q.—Then you have a desire to communicate with those still in the body?

A.—Salvation of troubled souls gives us power to benefit, and that is our wealth.

Q.—Are the unsatisfied longings of this life satisfied on your plane?

A.—Yes. Wants are here generally satisfied.

Q.—On your plane do you still continue to take interest in the sciences which you studied while in earth form, or does your change of state change the trend of your investigations?

A.—Science with us, as with you, widens our knowledge of natural laws. When you join our scientific society here you will change your estimate of some people.

Q.—Do you mean that your science deals more with character than with things ?

A.—Your estimate of scientific knowledge is based upon your earthly sense relations; you know what Jesus said, "A little child shall lead them."

Q.—Do you have there your seasons of rest, equivalent to our sleep?

A.—Our ideas of rest are not like unto yours. When we rest we creep down to your level.

Q.—Can you explain sleep as we know it?

A.—Sleep is the silence of thought, the garnering of life's harvest. Sleep is not death's twin, but willingness converted into modes of rest.

Q.—What are dreams ?

A.—Dreams are the percipients of life's experiences—shams of being.

Q.—What is character?

A,—Energies of mind. Mean only that one determines to be the best his ideal will allow.

Q.—Are the different religious beliefs held by men on our plane carried on to your sphere and believed in, after their death ?

A.—Clear thinking is not at once attained by even the fairest minded who experience the change you call death; and with new meanings attached to old ideas the sects still persist for one or more changes of planes.

Q.—Are all planets phases of the life of this earth?

A.—Planets are worlds such as this in many cases, but most frequently on a far different mode of existence with different sense relations.

Q.—Do beings on different planets have language akin to ours ?

A.—No, for language, environments, evolutionary developments and sympathies are in all worlds different.

Q.—Do you in your sphere ever see or hold communication with beings belonging to other planets than this earth ?

A.—Your ideas as to planets are so tinged and guaged by your circumscribed sense perceptions that you would regard what we know of other conditions as mere nonsense.

Q.—But can you not at least tell us whether the inhabitants of any planet are like us in form or intellectual conditions ?

A.—Shadowy beings you would consider the sweet personalities who come from those planets with which our plane has mortal communication ; but we know they are real beings, albeit on a far different basis, from yours and ours. Changed conditions make it impossible to state, or to clearly know, whether they are below or above us in intelligence.

Q.—Do spirits from different planets visit earth ?

A.—Some do. Change the subject. There are certain limits to which spirits on your plane are bounded because it is thought best that men creep before walking.

Q.—Does cremation of the body after death interfere with spiritual conditions? Is earth burial preferable from your point of veiw?

A.—Cremation of the body doubtlessly is the most esthetic mode of disposing of the material habitation of spirit, and there is no partaking of body with spirit after dissolution. None at all, no more than when we leave one dwelling for another.

Q.—Then would you advise cremation in preference to burial?

A.—The mode of dissolution matters little. The freed spirit cares not whether its old shell decays by degrees, or instantaneously.

Q.—Does the form of man change with change of planes?

A.—Cannot you understand that your ideas of form are limited by your sense perceptions, and you could not understand the correct answer to your question!

Q.—Do class distinctions exist on your plane?

A.—Classes here are high or low according to the strength of moral worth, and also superior lovingness of all. Your companionship with mortals is based on their congeniality in some way with your moral and intellectual nature. So also with your companionship with souls on our plane.

Q.—Are the standards of merit on your plane identical with or similar to ours here?

A.—Souls are classed here according to their withstanding of the strongest temptations to which they are subjected on your plane. There are those here guilty of great crimes according to earthly codes who yet take precedence of some who had no temptation to sin.

Q.—Do family names and affinities persist?

A.—Years gone, by this question was seriously discussed among us and this conclusion was reached: that names with you were but the signs of tribal relations between those of mere blood-relationship; here, blood relationship does not count, and spirit sympathies come always to be classified by new readings.

Q.—Are members of the same family drawn toward their own relations when they come to your sphere?

A.—Conditionally they are, but many times family relations are not as pleasant as some other mode of personal magnetism would be.

Q.—Why is it that we get so few messages from our relatives in the Spirit-world in spite of our strong desire to do so?

A.—Bonds of sympathetic being are stronger than relationship over here. Many whose silence you wonder at were not in accord with you. True lines of sympathy are drawn over here. Blood relations are often hurtful, but soul relations will ever assert themselves and give joy when recognized. Bonds of spirit are stronger than man's paltry blood-relationship.

Q,—Do husband and wife continue lovers on your planes?

A.—If a man and woman—married, according to your ideas—are in true rapport with each other, the change called death does not alter their relations, but if through misapprehension they are mismated, however desirous they may be of higher development, their ardent hopes count for naught if natural sympathy says no. Sympathies and antipathies are stronger here than with you, for here we separate the wheat from the chaff; we only care for the spirits who are at one with us. Changed conditions make new relations.

One of the puzzling indefinite answers given in

regard to a question relating to one not personally known to us, was this:

Thou shouldst ask of thy spirit guide Pharos to seek within spiritual brotherhood some select soul whose sympathies are all noumenal, the characteristics of the spirit of whom you wish evidence.

But when we asked, no reply was given.

Another time when we asked for information desired by an acquaintance, was written, "T—'s spirit friends and your spirit friends are not on the same plane. Shall not your own sympathetic spirit friends be first in relation to you?"

Q.—Does every human being continue life on higher planes?

A.—Shall not all who are abortions die?

Q.—Do you mean that some born on this plane may spiritually die, from lack of force to persist?

A.—Yes—both women and men are born into the divine humanity who must necessarily perish because they have not sufficient soul strength to persist.

On another occasion I asked a similar question, putting it in this form:

Q.—Do we still endure after the change called death?

A.—Sensitive souls *endure* what you call life. Spirits on our plane go on striving after blessed existence.

I had used the word "endure" unthinkingly in the sense of continuance, and not until the answer was written did it occur to my mind that it might be understood in the sense of suffering or bearing with, as indicated in the reply.

We put the question at another time thus:

Q.—Does every human being at death necessarily enter into spiritual spheres, or do some fail of reaching another stage of existence?

A.—Achievement is the test. Children with undeveloped intellect, but with inherited possibilities may develop into noble formation but sometimes they are abortions. Born with certain capacities, they may grow to their high ideal, but occasionally they are found to have roots too shallow for perfection and they die as you understand death—they cease to persist.

Q.—Does personality—one's individual selfhood persist on your plane?

A.—Personality does persist, but not as strongly as on earth. Each soul assimilates with its highest ideal and grows toward it, even as on earth you aspire to the best you can assimilate."

And again,

Q.—Will we, or anyone, individually obtain eternal life?

A.—Another upward step may shed light on the question just asked. As the poet says: "He knows. He knows!" We do not yet.

Q.—Are all born on earth sure of continued existence?

A.—Abortions are no more infrequent spiritually than physically. Such must die out—cease to exist. Punitive methods help to sift such abortions from reproduction. We don't quite understand; but we hope much.

Q.—Is not every spirit on your plane assured of continued existence?

A.—Continued existence does not necessarily mean immortality to all mankind. When the change you call death occurs, there is but a step taken toward the change which annihilates as well as strengthens.

Q.—Does our personality continue through all

planes of being or is it sometimes merged into one great all ?

A.—Man's being is not as you fancy, some atom by itself but "all are but parts of one stupendous whole."

Q.—But on your plane does the individual persist with its personal loves, hates and idiosyncracies?

A.—Spirit life is life of the individual brought into harmony with those of the same sympathies.

Q.—With those whose moral nature attracts ? whom they love?

A.—Yes, love is the great principle of man's being—LOVE.

Q.—Will you tell us if we have any pre-existence as conscious individuals, or does our individualism begin with our birth into this outer world?

A.—Placed as germs from a great fountain of soul life, your atomistic mortality as ego begins.

Q.—On your plane do you arrive at certainty in regard to immortality?

A.—We here are as ignorant as you are as to the ultimate of existence. Immortality is still an undetermined issue. One life at a time seems as pertinent with us as with you.

CHAPTER VI.

EXPERIENCES AFTER DEATH.

From a large variety of communications purporting to come from those just passed over to higher planes, I have chosen a few which are interesting because of their statements of thought or feelings after transition. Many others equally interesting I may not use because they include personal matters which, whether I believe or not, I have no right to publish. Even in those here given I do not use the correct initials. I give names only in special cases as in the message below purporting to be from Mr. Barker who was once a widely known public lecturer.

A.—Joseph Barker wants to say a word.

This name was not in any way in my mind, nor in that of Mr. U.'s, when this was written, but as Barker was an English lecturer in behalf of what was then termed "infidelity," when Mr. U. and I were young people, it is not strange that this message was given when we asked the above question, but it struck me as very odd. He changed his views again before his death back to the orthodox faith, but whether he ever believed, or took any interest in Spiritualism I do not know.

Q.—Will Mr. Barker state what he wishes to say?

A.—Only wish to show to Brother Underwood

that earth-born egotistic knowledge, or seeming knowledge, is subject to great somersaults when confronted by facts of spiritual existence.

Q.—Will Joseph Barker please state his own individual impression of spirit condition when he first entered spirit spheres ?

A.—My first impression as I awoke was this—it seemed to me that I was still in the body, but strangely could not make myself seen or heard by those who were most near to me.

Q.—How long was it before you realized spirit life, and what most impressed you with the fact of change ?

A.—The presence and astonishing realness of those whom I had considered what you call dead, and their courageous attention to me in my ignorance of spiritual conditions. As to how long, space and time are merely sense conditions—you are so limited !

Q.—When you realized the new life how did you look upon your former earthly work ?

A.—Spirit tried to work back and undo the work of earthly ignorance, but could not. But have learned since that even that ignorant work was a necessary part of spiritual education. I was a factor in your being brought to the light, in so far as I helped you to question and to doubt man-made dogmas and creeds which acted as bars to pure thought and high purpose.

Q.—What do you now think the best method of spiritual education on earth ?

A.—Continual questioning of materialistic fallacies, vigorous agitation of spiritual phenomena ; enlistment of thinking minds pro and con ; stirring up of minds everywhere on spirit lines.

Q.—What should, in your opinion, be our most reasonable attitude toward the existing religious systems of to-day ?

A.—The attitude of convicted believers in spirit-

ual life toward the blind leaders of the blindly dogmatic in spiritual matters should be that of the Seers to those yet in the dark—as full of loving-ness and tenderness as one who sees to those bereft of sight, eager to remove the disability but patient with their natural mistakes and halting steps. Remember as they are, so once were ye, and they too shall be ultimately led to the light.

One evening at the earnest request of a sorrowing daughter we doubtingly asked if any word could be heard from her parent, with this result:

A.—Spirit called L. P. W. has not been summoned, but we who write you are told by those who are in charge, that his medium is not yet posited. Law is supreme on our planes, but as soon as possible the loving daughter will hear in unexpected ways nearer her than you are.

Upon my still further insisting upon some answer being given her, I was asked to sit the following evening, when I was told the father had been found.

A.—Thou shalt give to the one who grieves without reason the answers dictated by the one whose advice she wishes. "L., mourn not, though we are so seemingly far apart we are really nearer than in earth life. I now understand much in thy life of self-sacrifice which escaped my notice while with you. Forgive me, dear child, all that I omitted to say or do when in the form. Oh, I thought and felt much, much more than I dared to say—but enough of reminiscences—let us look forward to futurity, whose hours of joy your plane may not guess."

Q.—Won't L. P. W., if this is really that personality, give some circumstantial statement to convince his daughter of his identity, since we are

entirely unacquainted with anything in regard to either of them?

A.—Spontaneously with your question comes this test to me: Whom will she ask to share the trust I left with her? What that trust is she knows, and I need not specify.

Q.—Can you give us an idea of your present state?

A.—Shadow-like seems all I left behind, but strongly shows spiritual affiliations against the background of hopelessness painted by the religious theologians.

Q.—Can you give your daughter further personal test of your individuality?

A.—Personally would I say to L. that I am abidingly with her with a power of lovingness never known on your side; and if she can recall conversations held with her within a week or so of my change, she will understand what that change really is.

Q.—What can you say to lighten her sorrow?

A.—Joy, joy, joy, on this side, which she will experience and understand. How can we who are enfranchised explain to those yet imprisoned all the joy of freedom!

It should be understood that the foregoing communications purported to come from a spirit whom we had never met in earth-life; that the relations between him and the living daughter were unknown to us, and could not be guessed from our brief correspondence with her. That I was personally averse to asking any word from the other side for her—and that the references to self-sacrifice on her part—a "trust" which she was asked to share—and conversations in regard to spirit life just previous to his transition, were all blind

words to me, and I transcribed them for the daughter with shame-faced doubt. But a letter from her solved the riddles of this communication, and I was overwhelmed with astonishment at the harmony of the hints given with the facts afterward made known to me.

The following was given as from one we knew as a bright, intelligent woman of a scientific turn of mind, somewhat agnostic in belief.

Creation called E. B. is here.

Q.—Did E. B. before her change expect a future life?

A.—Very few thinkers can definitely state exactly what they believe as to spirits, so little is known beyond cavil; but no thinker who has studied the pros and cons of the question can declare that we do not survive this ephemeral phase of being—and I say unto you that I did not dream of the spans of beatific soul life possible to us when with you, and my soul is overwhelmed with wonder and joy.

The following was given as from one who was considered a leading light in a certain kind of literature. He was also a Spiritualist.

Q.—Can or will E. A. P. communicate with us tonight?

A.—Change wording to this. Will all that was best in E. A. P. spiritually materialize in answer to Bhama's (Mr. U.'s) question?

Q.—We accept the amendment.

A.—Still I exist, but in a sphere where I had no idea I belonged. Earthly standards are all wrong. Character and altruistic aims are here of more importance than earthly shallow combinations. Ah, how foolish to philosophize on questions of

future life, when your environments are so full of merely physical masters. Bounds of physical cannot word spiritual.

Q.—Is there anything you would like to say as a message to your friends on this side ?

A.—Say to those who inquire that E. A. P. still lives, but is surprised by the new mind he feels within him. Positive evidence is not so clearly obtainable as I thought when in earthly form.

When the name of a fellow-officer in the regiment to which Mr. U. belonged, was written, Mr. U. asked in regard to his feelings on realizing his new life. Answer came,

A.—Crestfallen—would get on better if I had known the truth about this life when we were together.

Q.—Is your situation better or worse than while here?

A.—Better. Soul gaining knowledge of spiritual progress.

Q.—Can you see your signature on the framed document I have before me?

A.—Can't see anything. Am told the questions you ask.

Q.—Can you hear our voices?

A.—Sound comes from your voice, but strangely, I am not able to hear. Pharos acts as interpreter.

Very often it was written as in this case that Pharos who it has been explained to me is the one who controls my hand, (though of late "a band" is frequently spoken of, of which this spirit is leader) acted as interpreter or amanuensis for other spirits communicating, but too weak or ignorant of the laws governing communication to write themselves. One evening the name of a

person once prominent in certain circles as a lecturer in defense of materialistic opinions, was written slowly. We asked if he could communicate with us. Then in the handwriting, which we recognized as that of Pharos, came this :

Pharos acts as amenuensis for B. R. and may not convey clearly his meaning, for he is still in a weak and debilitated condition, on account of his unexpected change of form.

Q.—Can he explain to us something of that change?

A.—Won't B. F. U. put into clearer wording his question?

Q.—If this is B. R., we would like to have him give expression to his own present most dominant thought.

A.—Says he would like to give sure evidence of continued existence, because when on your plane he mistakenly did so much to befog searchers after the truth, and he hopes his fellow-worker with the light vouchsafed him, will undo the evil unwittingly and sincerely done by one who had no such spiritual insight.

Q.—Have you met any with whom you were in sympathy here ?

A.—Soul of M.

Q.—What was his greeting to you?

A.—He said, B. you and I were both mistaken as to the true answer to earth's hard problems—the reason for the apparent disparity between man and man ; the appearance of partiality on the part of the author of life for one portion of humanity above another.

Q.—Has M. changed his views as to the population question?

A.—Yes. His explanation made from study of the conditions here, was that worlds like ours are

workshops where character is evolved, and the trials and temptations of both upper and lower strata of society are essential to true development, and only one side of Being's manifold manifestations can be shown on your limited but most essential plane.

Q.—Have you met S. H.?

A.—Changed conditions make S. H. and your respondent on far different planes.

Q.—Is spirit-life as you now understand it, an improvement on earth-life?

A.—Ephemeral phases of life such as you are now undergoing are never satisfactory.

Q.—Why?

A.—Because as undeveloped beings you cannot understand the processes of spirit evolution, and are constantly mistaking a phase for the whole of being.

A rather odd communication was the following, which from my superficial knowledge of the person supposed to be writing I should never have thought of ascribing to him :

Q.—Who will communicate ?

A.—Spirit of L. L.

This was one who had while here been locally active in various works of reform such as Anti-Slavery, Temperance, etc., but who had only recently passed over.

Q.—If L. L. is here would like to hear from him how he likes his new condition ?

A.—Change of form has brought me into such strange changed conditions that I am as one home-sick—glad to get near you two.

Q.—Why are you homesick ?

A.—Have not found out the real reason ; things are so different from former ideas.

Q.—But can you not give us one reason for your disappointment in your new life ?

A.—Well, I had felt sure that old fighters like myself would be at once recognized, and assigned to our place as workers ; but so far as now seen I have to offer credentials as positive as a servant.

Q.—Have you met any of your old fellow-workers ?

A.—Some have come, but I am surprised how few. I am dissatisfied, but I am assured that I will soon be satisfied.

Q.—What is the chief reason so far as you can describe it, of this dissatisfied state of mind ?

A.—The uppermost thought in what remains of the mind once known as L. L. is that of deserved humiliation. I did not understand until now how many similar minds to mine were evolved through the ages. I feel mainly abashed and long to return to old sympathetic friends, and yet I am aware that this feeling is of low, selfish origin.

This seemed so real and pathetic that we could not refrain from an expression of sympathy and encouragement.

A.—Friends, your words, your desire to help are already uplifting and helpful. I shall soon grow strong under such tonics. But I think as I am so new here that you had better put off communicating with me until I know whereof I affirm. Just now I am a homesick spirit and may give wrong impressions. I or some friendly spirit will impress you when will be the best time to communicate.

A few weeks later L. L.'s name appeared unexpectedly and a message filled with satisfaction in his new state which he had learned gradually to

understand was given then, and once or twice briefly thereafter.

Soon after the death of a literary friend we asked.

Q.—Can you describe to us the coming to your plane of our friend S. O. E.?

A.—S. came over by gradual stages. She was spiritually in harmony with our and your plane sometime before she was elected to become one of us. She soon showed signs of consciousness and was changed without much worry on her part. Now she is happy as a freed soul should be understanding the new life and all its significance.

The above refers to one who passed away in old age, intellectual in her tastes and a believer in spirit existence. The following purported to come from a friend who in life was a strong believer in Spiritualism—very soon after his transition.

Q.—Will C. W. say something this evening as promised?

A.—Yes. C says, tell Underwood that I shall not yet speak of the new society I find myself in. Don't want to give wrong evidence in regard to spirit return, which is true, true, true!

Q.—Have you any special thing you wish to say to us?

A.—So many things, but principally that we never die. I am more alive here than ever before—doubt forever dispelled. Oh, if I could do ardent things by which I could reach all humanity and assure them, as I myself am here assured, of soul life!

Q.—How did you feel at the moment of death? Were you conscious, or unconscious, until after the separation from your body?

A.—Conscious of a change but one so easily

made that I felt puzzled whether, as Paul said, I was in the body or out. Sense perceptions so changed! I saw what seemed to be C. W. lying inert, senseless, while the real thinking, loving, living C. W. stood by unable to will that senseless body to any movement, and I said, "Why, I am freed from that prison!"

Q.—Were any of your spirit friends near you at that hour, and perceptible to you?

A.—Looking around I was much surprised to see so many well known friends.

Q.—Will you tell us who were there?

A.—Wilson.

As this was written I mentally queried, "What Wilson?" When immediately followed, "You don't know him." Then was written the full name of one of whom I had heard but did not know personally.

Q.—Whom did you first recognize?

A.—Mother—then my first wife—B. B. S. W. C. H.—spirits innumerable.

After this followed answers which were too much concerned with private affairs to be given, but very characteristic; matters unknown to either of us present were written about, of a nature which I could not without seeming impertinence, undertake to verify.

One evening was written unexpectedly, "Wonder if you would wish a word from Franklin B——?" As this was the name of a relative who in life had been an ardent Methodist, we answered, "Why certainly—will he tell us if his changed state met his expectations while here?"

A.—You ought to know—confess I was so sur-

prised! Your Aunt M came, and said, "Well, Franklin, this is not the sort of heaven we expected, is it?"

Here the communication was suddenly broken off, and further questions received no answer. This was a frequent occurrence, showing that our wishes were of no helpful avail in regard to what was written,

Once appeared the name of an acquaintance of Mr. U.'s boyhood—a commonplace, jolly sort of person. Mr. U. asked a number of personal questions which were answered satisfactorily, then he was asked if he was satisfied with his new condition when the following unexpected reply was given in words which Mr. U. said were characteristic.

A.—Earth don't amount to shucks when you get over here. All right, and happy.

Q.—But can't you tell us what makes it pleasanter—describe so we can understand?

A.—You'll find out as I did—'gainst the rules here to tell.

Q.—You might, however, give us just a hint as to what your experience was in leaving your body for the new state?

A.—Just be patient—it's all easy enough when you learn how. I was puzzled, but it all seems straight enough now.

Once when Mr. U. had been speaking of the frequent mixed messages, contradictions and occasional falsehoods in the earlier phases of this writing, as I took my pen again this was written:

Dear Underwood—I don't wonder that you are

suspicious of humbug, for in your case I should feel the same, but do believe in what we are able to do through the goodness of your wife.—One of many spirit friends.

Of one of pure life, high moral worth and cultured tastes—a widower who died suddenly in unpleasant surroundings, when we asked to be told how he took his strange transition, was given the following :

A.—E., his wife, wearied of waiting, and when his work on earth was done, and done well, she prayed that she might be allowed to call him to higher work. Her prayer was answered, and to emphasize the low estimate spirits set on earthly conditions, it was agreed that he should be called upon worldly arrangements of such strongly positive low grade as to show him most surely what spiritual good meant.

Q.—What were his first impressions or emotions on entering spirit life?

A.—Soon as spirit consciousness broke newly upon his soul, he first of all recognized his dear E. standing near with the others whom he was most in spirit sympathy with; and as he recognized them soul spake to soul as is here allowed. He was surprised, but soon joyfully understood the new sensation of freedom and positive progression, and could not express his gladness at his easy step upward.

One evening as soon as I took my pen, was written, "Shall you wish to hear from spirit spheres? There are now present numerous friends who will gladly answer questions."

Q.—Will you give the names of some of these?

A.—Ghosts are averse to assert Christian names which savor of egoism, but if you will call personal

names of those with whose thought your most spiritual sympathies are in harmony, then will be given answers.

Often in a playful way they named themselves "ghosts," "phantasms," etc., words which of myself I should not use in regard to this intelligence, and felt averse to the expressions when coming from this source.

Mr. U. asked whether L. E. was among those here present?

This was the name of a lady of fine intellectual attainments and rare logical power, but extremely cautious in statement, with whom we had been on intimate terms during her life time, who had been deeply interested in speculative philosophy, but previous to her death had only attained to an agnostic position in belief as to a future. To the question a somewhat evasive answer was given, touching on personal private matters, but indicating that she was present. We had often asked to hear from her but without avail.

Q.—Well, if this is really L. E., I would like to ask, knowing her disbelief while in this life of any future state of existence, how the new state of affairs impresses her mind?

A.—She has thought long over the new and altogether unexpected conditions in which she found herself, searching for the explanation and dares not yet state her shadowy theory, having found herself so very much mistaken when trying to make definitions of her position while on your lower plane. She says she had long wished to get into communication with earth friends but scarcely knew of a definite statement, which from her pres-

ent point of view, she could give confirmation such as she would have asked for when with you.

Q.—Do you think that your present state is preferable to our phase of existence?

A.—Oh yes—a further soul progression—I could say much, but do not care to now. I can now understand the necessity of doubt while on your starting point and will not say more now, as you thinkers will understand when you are as I am.

Q.—Do you know what is taking place among your friends on our plane?

A.—Yes, I am constantly informed of their spiritual progress,

Soon after the death of a somewhat prominent materialist another message was interrupted in this way: "Enough said as to personals, let some one else have a word!" We asked who it was desired to write, and after two or three attempts this was written: "Man named S. F. wants to attest that he still lives much to his surprise."

B. F. U.—I very much doubt S. F. saying that?

A.—Your doubt is not so great as was his when he was told that he could communicate through your wife. Your minds are in many respects the most sympathetic that he can be placed in rapport with, and though he is bewildered he will try to dictate a few words: "S. F. late of———, is going to express, so far as the new and strange yet reasonable condition in which he finds himself will permit, his pleasure at the possibility of personal communication with one whom he has long known as a fellow-worker in the field of rational reform, and wishes to assure B. F. Underwood of the genuineness of continued existence."

Q.—What prompts you to come to us especially?

A.—Love of the truth—which I ever loved, but until now dimly understood. I have here the

prospect of work for humanity as great—yes, far greater than I was permitted to accomplish when walled by sense conditions.

Q.—Can you give us a description of the state in which you find yourself?

A.—I wish to give you what is asked, but have not time now to decide as to test. I am new here, and cannot communicate directly, only by dictation, and with mistakes at that.

The message next given purported to be from one whom we knew had no belief in continued existence.

J. E. wishes to say a word.

Q.—Will he tell us how he likes his new phase of being ?

A.—Spirit. When I crossed over to this side of glass or mirror, I trusted greatly to coupons won by my life's work, but found to my surprise that, thrust asunder from all I had blindly held as true, I was all at sea—cast adrift with loss of compass and oars.

Q.—Did not friends come to your aid ?

A.—Spirits of those who cared for me came soon (interruption here.)

The following was written after the name of a wealthy materialist was given, a person who had bestowed liberally of his means while here, for scientific purposes.

Those may thank their fates to whom has been given the cult of poverty—within that line they will be able to do more effective work than I with all my money and good will was able to.

Q.—But you did much good with part of your money when here; does not that thought comfort you ?

A.—Yes; the good I did is the one comfort I have

here, but oh, the good I could have done had my eyes been opened; that makes me unhappy.

Q.—How did your new state of existence seem to you at first ?

A.—I was really very much astonished. I was you know, an out-and-out materialist, and when I found out how much mistaken I was, I was overwhelmed with distress.

A very remarkable statement was made to us when, very soon after the death of a medical friend, we asked if we could be put in communication with him. The first reply was :

Shall you now ask what conditions are necessary to M. D.'s communication ?

We said we would like to know,

A.—Sensory ducts are born with mortals which are here useless, and at re-birth these must be eliminated. Changes must occur most surely while the soul is unconscious, to make possible the realities of the new phase of being, and M. D. left earth's sphere in so chaotic a state of intelligence that it may be long ere his friends can get connected messages from him ; but this is strange doctrine to your stage of intelligence.

There is much food for thought as to the conditions of spirit life in this strange statement as to "sensory ducts," as well as in another purporting to come from J. P. Mendum, given in another place, that "I am told that all sense perceptions will slowly die out of my new life."

CHAPTER VII.

RHYTHMIC IMPROVISATION.

A not uncommon argument with those who cannot see in any form of this kind of communication, intelligence or knowledge beyond or outside of the individual personality whose hand is thus made use of without conscious willing, is that there is no evidence given of superior knowledge. For instance I am often told by those who have themselves had no personal experience of this power, that the verses I obtain are often not so good as I could compose myself; the prevalent idea in regard to man's change to another form or sphere of being, seeming to be that that change must immediately make even commonplace individualities over into beings capable of the sublimest thought and expression, and also capable of imparting at a moment's notice such sublime thoughts to our limited comprehension, and that if rhymed answers be given in this way to commonplace queries the rhythm, diction and thought should be far superior or at least equal to that of our greatest earthly poets. That does not seem to me to be the most sensible view to take of the matter.

In my own case, in the first place, there was no expectation whatever of rhymed answers being given. The very first that ever came was after the intelligence guiding my hand had over and over declared that this writing was the production

of discarnated spirits. When I asked if their state was preferable to ours, my expectation was to receive an answer in prose; but my hand was made to write rapidly as one in a joyous mood this parody on "There is a Happy Land."

There is a happy land
Not far away
Where soul with soul doth stand
With new array
When we reach that restful shore
Grief shall pain our hearts no more,
And the worst of life is o'er
Forever and aye.

This was signed George P. Morris, a song writer, whose name I had not thought of for years. The answer was so pertinent that as I read it I confess it gave me a little thrill of wonder and conviction of its truth.

Next came and soon after this, what purported to be from Browning in answer to some question as to whether spirits did really thus communicate with mortals. I did not expect a rhymed reply. The answer was written rapidly:

Round goes the world as song birds go—
There comes an age of over-throw,
Strange dreams come true; yet still we dream
Of deeper depths in life's swift stream.

This intimated, it seemed to me, that we were yet at the beginnings of spiritual progress and things still stranger to our limited knowledge would yet open to our comprehension. To me this seemed a beautiful and poetic answer which, if I had tried for weeks to arrange as a possible reply to my query, I could not have achieved.

Since these quickly improvised rhymed answers

to my questions have been given through my hand, I have tested, to the best of my ability, my own conscious power of improvising rhyme. I have tried to answer the simplest question, whose reply I could quickly give in prose, in rhyme, but I have not been able to think at once of the right words which would fall into rhythm, and I must confess since I am always in a perfectly normal state, so far as I can perceive, while my hand is being used, I cannot understand how any subconscious ego can be at work in so intellectually alert a way to deceive me by declaring these versified answers to be the work of "spirits."

I am sometimes particularly struck with the condensed intimations of some of these rhymed improvisations, the full import of which does not always strike my mind until some time later; for example when the name "W. C. Bryant' was written one evening, I said that I did not believe that was the poet Bryant. Mr. U. suggested that if it were, he might so indicate in some characteristic way when, without hesitation, my hand wrote the following unique verse :

> Woods and mountains, fields and pale morn,
> Witnesses were of beauteous wonders borne
> Into my questing soul while still enthralled
> Within the prison sphere which Matter walled.

Three years after these lines were written, at Cummington, Mass., the birthplace and long time home of William Cullen Bryant, was held the centennial celebration of the poet's birth, and from a newspaper correspondent's description of the old homestead site written on that occasion, I find the

following corroboration of that wonderfully condensed rhymed answer:

One thousand feet above the hamlet of West Cummington rises abruptly a rocky hill which was one of the favorite resorts of William Cullen Bryant. A short distance to the east the ground rises, forming another rounded summit which, though 185 feet lower, is still 1,960 feet above the sea. A mile from the top of the lower hill, on its eastern slope, stands the Bryant homestead, and near it, the grove to which on August 16th thousands came from near and from far to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the great poet's birth.

For some time these improvised rhymes consisted mainly of one or two stanzas or sometimes a couplet. After awhile I inquired whether the unseen friends would not write me a longer poem on a subject of their own choosing. I asked this late one night at the close of a sitting and I was told that if we would sit for writing at a certain date several days ahead, this would be done.

I may here note a strange fact in these dates set by the intelligence writing. They are dates rapidly written, before my own mind can think ahead far enough to be sure that such dates, given with the days of the week on which they come, are correct, yet on consulting the calendar, I always find them right, showing that, though they say our notions of time are all wrong, they have a better idea of our time than I myself have. On the occasion referred to, we sat at the time appointed and the following poem was then written:

SPIRIT THOUGHTS.

Broadened by our wider sphere
Souls can think more clearly here;
Roads on every side appear,
But which to take is not so clear.

Whither leads your poet's thought,
Overcome by power so fraught
With spirit lore that here is taught
Soon as e'er God's law is sought?

Zealous plead some spirit friends
Sara's ways with theirs shall trend,
But Bhama's sterner will must send
Its martial influence to lend

Direction as to thought's highway;
Where shall we lead so he may stay
Convinced by us of spirit sway
Within thought realms of brightest ray?

Science is of spirit born,
Yet pseudo-science spirits scorn;
Philosophy, so-called 'mongst men,
But touches spirit wisdom's hem.

True science never can be known
To those who walk by sense alone;
Philosophic lore has shown
Thought essence from our sphere is thrown

In diluted form and sense
Suited to man's present tense
Of childish ignorance—yet intense
In searching out the why and whence.

Conclude you, who pupils are,
Whether we are still so far
From space and time as to debar
From sending message to your star.

Shall we now bid you good-night,
Smiling o'er the lines we write?
Thanks are also due by right
To those who spirit thoughts indite.

When the title "Spirit Thoughts" was given, I wondered what could be written on such a subject, and not one word emanated from my own mind.

The last verse takes note of the fact that I was smiling at their intimation for Mr. U.'s benefit that our earthly physical science was only a small outcome of the larger wisdom of spirit spheres.

It will be noted that Mr. U. is often addressed by this intelligence as "Bhama," a name or word utterly unknown to either of us. They say it is his "spirit name," and when once I asked them to explain its meaning the following, which it seems to me contains a hint of reincarnation, a theory to which I am personally averse, was written :

> Bhama was he in older days,
> Bhama means the word that stays
> With souls sincere, divinely born,
> Elected for the souls forlorn.

I know this seems fantastic and almost ridiculous, at least it seemed so to us, and therefore how could it emanate from our minds in any way. I am sure I cannot believe that, knowing as I do the real state of our own minds, so far as we "atoms of being" can know ourselves.

One evening when various circumstances had set my mind in a current of depression, I half-seriously asked if my unseen friends could not give me some words of comfort in verse. At once the following was written, the phraseology and sense of which still somewhat puzzle me :

> Sense of writing power here given
> Grows apace with spirits shriven,
> Standing near the gate called Heaven
> Awaiting sin to be forgiven.
>
> Comfort we would gladly serve
> To each and all whom we observe
> Work within the subtle curve
> Of spirit-lines—soul, sense, and nerve.

Chanting doubtfully our advice,
We may give you in a trice
Sane suggestion that unwise
'Twould be to state our present guise.

Shall not thy faith appeal to us
Whose ardent wish within the Hush
Of Life, so far beyond the rush
Of narrow aims which soul-needs crush,

Is but to help all feeble souls
Toward their higher aims and goals
Thought-hampered by Earth's sordid roles—
We seek to give them 'pass-paroles.'

Choose then of all we offer free
The best which we can give to thee:
And Spirit love hands over sea
Shall bring in touch—soon thou shalt see.

I give this only as a specimen of thought and expression quite out of line of my own personal ideas, for there is intimation in these verses that the writer is in some sort of state of probation "awaiting sin to be forgiven," and the last lines were measurably prophetic.

Here are some lines in answer to my request that my unseen friends give me a word of advice:

Use with care thy spirit gifts;
  Clothe our thoughts with kindly words;
Bear in mind that what uplifts
  Thoughts to planes above the herds

Of common souls in farthest ken,
  Must be the spirit's nearest goal,
Of doing good by us to men
  Because of spirit's love of soul.

Shall not our sympathies disclose
  Wherein our spirit planes are one?
Spontaneously we create as shows
  Those percepts Matter's shapes take on.

And again this

Share with those in darkness held
The truths of spirit, which shall weld
With thine the power to lift the low
Up to the spirit planes we show

To thee whose love for us is shown
With earnest proof—and you alone
Must understand, and true translate
To those who share our spirit state

Of higher powers and larger love
With which we spirits mortals move;
By which we show to those of sense
That spirit power is no pretence.

Once when I felt annoyed by certain letters which came to me from some simple hearted persons ignorant of what spiritual communication meant beyond some fortune-telling tricks, asking me to sit for them to find out where certain stolen articles were, etc., I asked my unseen friends how such persons should be treated—asked with a kind of indignation which I expected them to sympathize with, as they seemed to understand me pretty well, but to my surprise the following verses was their answer:

Bounded by your spirit band
Soul attraction draws all strands
Of earthly friendship, shared with those
Whose spirit sympathies disclose

Whatever aims with thine are one
Strive they upward—joys begun
Upon the earth-sphere they shall gain
In some far distant spirit plane.

Love then thy friends of simple lives;
Bethink thee of the hope that strives
To lead them upward to the spheres
Joined spirally from lowest tiers.

I have before quoted the answer given to me when I said once that I dreaded more the painful

process by which the spirit escaped the body than the fact of death itself, but think it worth while to reproduce it here:

Strange may seem soul life to all
Whose knowledge bounds, within the wall
Of sense, are held by laws which pain
Born of love, shall burst again.

Pain, born of love, shall burst our bounds of present knowledge and thus open to our widened vision real soul life! Such a thought should surely reconcile us somewhat to the pain of the process by which we will enter into liberty.

Once when we expressed a desire for some clear statement in regard to the conditions of spirit life, there was written:

Friends, please take on trust our love,
Perhaps yourselves will sometime prove
How slowly mortal sense can rate
The gleams from powers above your state.

When asked why we had to pass through this phase of existence, this was the reply:

Potter's clay must take the form,
Spirits will it shall be born.

Another couplet expresses an apparent truth of this life—

The self-conceit of mortal man
Is but a part of the eternal plan!

When I questioned what seemed to me in a measure dogmatic dicta from this source, this answer was given:

Share thou with those of earthly lines
Thousand sealed orders whose designs
Great shall seem when understood
By larger light of brotherhood.

Once when I asked to be shown what good would come of all these communications through my hand, this was the answer:

> Slow moves power through praise and prayer,
> Shall not good come from our care ?
> And ours shall ever be the task
> To guide your souls our side the mask.

Once, when I had rather insisted upon getting a rhymed thought from this source, the following was written without pause :

> Poets are not forced to sing
> Charming songs to please ;
> Still to you we choose to bring
> Rhymes like summer breeze.
> Shall not we, who poets are,
> Answer you who fain would be
> Counted midst our skies a star,
> That stars spin in their courses free ?

At another time, when, after some serious writing had been given, I pleaded for a verse of some kind, some little hesitation was shown; then one was begun a little impatiently, shown by jerky, rapid writing,

> Should we whose thought is mortal's aid
> Submit to rhythmic furors played
> By—

then stopped and wrote "Good-night," Whereupon I asked to be forgiven for my importunity. Immediately, without division into lines, this was written :

> We are not in rhyming mood;
> Please let that be understood.
> Rhymes are babe's diversions you
> Should never ask us to pursue.

Again, when we had disputed some of their

statements they went off into rythmic rage as follows:

Bounded by your spirit bars
Waves of psychic rhythm wars
Against your cold, phlegmatic souls
Which see and seek but selfish goals.

This unprovoked display of petulance amused us and evoked the remark: "Don't you think your insinuations are rather severe and unjust?

Sometimes spirits grow severe,
When everything they see and hear
Takes the form of selfish quest
To gain from every spirit guest.
Sadly doubtful souls e'en here
Grow humanity to fear;
Sincerity and courteous words
With spirit being best accords.

"It seems to us that it is you who are lacking in sincerity and courteous words," was remarked in reply, "and you know quite well that we ask the questions we do from no selfish motives whatever. Don't you think it is you who are in the wrong?"

Brought before our spirit court
Shall not the verdict be *en tort?*
Perfection's phase is not yet ours,
Far higher spheres may give such dowers.

Of poetry they wrote:

Bond of brotherhood divine
Born in men of every clime
Stronger grows as souls grow strong,
Speaks to all through poet's song.

In these rythmic improvisations we were personally often rebuked, encouraged, and given lessons in conduct and character, while we ourselves were not at all in didactic or rhythmic moods.

CHAPTER VIII.

SPIRIT TEACHINGS.

During our various sittings, which were never held regularly—often months elapsing between—and never very long at a time, all sorts of questions came up incidentally, and I shall endeavor under the head of "Spirit Teachings" to classify partially the replies on various subjects given on different occasions.

That Supreme Intelligence that Christianity names "God" is never so named by the authors of the writing given through my hand, but the terms used are "the All-of-Good," "the All-of-Being," etc. I here reproduce a few such references:

Q.—Do you, from your advanced point of view, discern clearly the why and wherefore of existence?

A.—Yonder in the distance is the All-of-Being—still so ghostly in its affirmations. Yet at this point we know no more than you do on a lower round of the ladder.

In a communication purporting to come from the Mystic, Jacob Boehme, reference is made to the source of spirit as follows:

Q.—Can you tell us something characteristic of your own individuality, so that we may recognize whether your claim to be Boehme the mystic philosopher, is true?

A.—The man called Boehme, like thousands of so-called Monons was but the expression man's

knowledge could take shape in, of the great All-of-Being—gods, ye call yourselves—ye are but the faint reflections of the thought of gods who dared make you Atoms in their images, distorted at that—but before you lies the path to greatness equal to your glorious paternity.

Q.—Do you mean to imply that we are creations, and so have no eternal existence ?

A.—What is your idea of what is meant by the word eternal ?

Q.—That which is without beginning and without end ?

A.—Yes ; but ye know not that which is without beginning or end—language with you hath not words to express eternal verities. Ye are but babes. Why ask us to give you knowledge before you have taken lessons in science of thought and spiritual knowledge ?

Q.—That is hardly a fair answer. Although we may not be able to grasp in its entirety the idea of eternity, yet we do know what the word eternal means in a general way.

A.—Eternal from your atomistic point of view does not mean anything whatever. You are not able to definitely define or explain it. We admire your courage in seeking to do battle with us on a point you think perfectly clear, but we cannot explain to you points of the question utterly inexplicable from your primary school of knowledge.

Q.—Can you tell us, at least, whether spirit as a whole, or in its individual atoms, exists eternally?

A.—Yes. Spirit as a whole is eternal—exists, did exist—will exist by force of Powers you cannot understand. But you as individual, self-conscious atomistic particles of spirit wholeness, are not eternal and must return to the Primal Source. There is happiness, however, almost undreamable,—possible before you atoms are

submerged—returned to that Primal Source, which makes your existence all good.

Q.—Could you not give us an idea through what process such happiness is to be obtained?

A.—Souls of those born of our spiritual travail, can you not understand how deep our interest in you may be, though we are debarred by law beyond your ken, of giving you hints of your kinship to higher phases of life.

Q.—Well we are grateful at least for your kind expressions of interest in us—that is pleasing to know.

A.—Your happiness works toward ours—man's nature we know—good night.

At another time the following was given:

B. F. U.—Can you tell us in what consisted the sin against the Holy Ghost?

A.—Shall you wish to know what the Holy Ghost means?

Q.—We would like your definition.

As I considered the Holy Ghost, as popularly regarded, a mere myth, and had no idea that it was in any way a philosophical conception, I protested here against considering such nonsense, but my hand just then wrote rapidly the following:

A.—Long ago the chief thinkers like Socrates, Plato, Epicurus, and many such, were anxious to find out the Essence of Spirit, but only partially was their earnest search rewarded. The Essence of Being—Spencer's Unknown (not Unknowable) —was the unanswered answer to these queries of earnest spirits. The Holy Ghost is the Unknown of Herbert Spencer—the Essence of life of other thinkers—the spirit of inquiry of today, the inspiration of the revelations given through you and many others.

Q.—Have you on your plane any more definite ideas regarding the being, or personality called God than we have?

A.—Shall any man by searching find out God?

Q.—Why do you use the term man? I thought you called yourselves spirits.

A.—Spirits we are. All Matter must pessimistically persist in declaring that Spirit is not, and cannot be, when the truth is, that Matter is not, save phenomena, and Spirit is the only reality.

Another time when we asked a word of explanation as to the characteristics of the Supreme Power from the Spiritual point of view, we received a somewhat rebuking answer in these words :

A.—Thou askest of us a word from our soul to yours, sense bound sharers with us of spiritual possibilities! Brother and sister whose two sense developments are really but one assertive Spark of the great Soul of Being, ye should understand that ye are yet in your embryo condition spiritually, and we might as well try to teach the human embryo all the possibilities of earth-life yet to be, as to teach you before transition the truths pertaining to the higher spheres possible to you! How shall we in this sphere so far beyond yours, explain that which no words, nor experience or environments on your plane, have cognizance of?

SPIRIT AND MATTER.

Q.—Do higher beings live in space of four dimensions?

A.—Space of dimensions pertains to matter, and beings outside of matter's limitations cannot answer your pertinent questions with clear-cut meaning to those on your plane of three dimensions. Oh! shall not you sometime wonder at your own blinded perceptions, when your eyes are opened! Shouldst thou not ask more questions pertaining to the

higher spiritual life of Being, than to confine your thoughts to these sciolistic queries which have meanings only to quibbling souls on your narrow plane.

Q.—Has matter any actual existence?

A.—That cannot be answered until you understand what is meant by actual existence.

Q.—What we mean by actual existence of matter is as we now know it as related to our consciousness.

A.—States of consciousness are symbols through which mortal men are brought more surely within the radius of eternal truth.

Q.—Can you explain the true relation between Spirit and Matter?

A.—Sense perceptions and sense language may not explain to you what to us is, oh, how clear!

Q.—Won't you try to give an answer which will at least approximately explain your meaning?

A.—Spirit and matter, while apparently in unison so far as you can understand, are yet as far apart as light and shade, as right and wrong, as husk and grain.

All through these communications emphasis is laid on the power and law of Love in the universe; I give here a few out of many such expressions.

LOVE.

Q.—How shall we assimilate more and more to the higher spiritual life?

A.—Conquer selfishness; love all; outgrow envy; grow ashamed of the lower nature in you and fight it day by day, so shall you more and more assimilate to spiritual life.

Q.—Will not Pharos give us some strong sentences in regard to the spiritual life?

A.—Self must ever become less and less predominant as man's spirit ascends toward the power

that permeates all Being. Assumption of greatness in Atoms prevents ascension of spirit toward the greater happiness of spiritual lovingness, and growth onward toward wisdom.

Q.—Is love a means of discipline, as well as a spring of perpetual joy ?

A.—Your question goes to the root of spirituality, and would demand volumes to reply—but in brief we may say that love is the root, power, and substance of all things, spiritual, temporal, and carnal.

Q.—When one enters Spirit-life what is the highest condition of satisfaction and advancement ?

A.—Surrender of egotistic clamor and self-consciousness ; longing to help others more helpless—desire to be of use, and shamefacedness over the little able to be accomplished.

Q.—What stands in Spirit-life as the highest test of character ?

A.—Spiritual life has degrees as physical life has. Different tests are used to test varying planes.

Q.—What quality counts for the most in spiritual evolution ?

A.—Shouldst thou not say, "Wherein shall be seen the thought-growth of soul atoms."

Q.—Well, wherein shall be seen the thought-growth of soul atoms ?

A.—In enlargement of sympathy ; in development of spiritual perception, and the glow of spiritual love.

Q.—Are our spirit friends often with us ?

A.—Spiritual care-takers have only certain duties as your guardians. The most essential part is to spur you onward to help yourselves.

Q.—Is it not a great trial of patience to you to deal with earth's unstable creatures ?

A.—Earth's children are as plants to the gar-

dener. We are often disappointed in the growth and blossoming of these mortal slips and cuttings or seedlings, but we are equally delighted when our care is repaid by some beautiful blossom or new variety of plant.

Q.—Is it within the possibilities of spiritual law that sure evidence of spirit existence can be given to R— as he so much desires?

A.—Love is the basis of all these human queries, and with that common state of sense and soul desire, we here are gifted with greater power to help than you are—but there are laws of angelic limitation regarding man which, while they grieve us as much as they do you, are yet infrangible.

Q.—Will you give us some equivalent word for infrangible?

A.—Unchangeable.

As to the meaning of the word "infrangible" I was not then sure, but on consulting the dictionary I found that the equivalent given was perhaps the nearest in meaning of any other.

Q.—You say all depends upon love, but how can self-respecting persons help despising mean and malicious souls who only seek to injure others?

A.—Look upon such servile souls abjectly foresworn with pity, because of their servility to evil and consequently slavish portions of true life.

Q.—But we have an aversion to snakes and kill them. What should be our feelings toward human rattlesnakes who by malice and hatred do injury?

A.—That such enmity to dangerous creatures exists now, is the legitimate outcome of false conceptions of doubtful souls. On your plane you are able to perceive only one or two sides of many-sided problems. To give you clear answers to your one-sided question we should be able to endow you with knowledge beyond your present capacity.

Some day you will understand. Love the least lovable when your knowledge has saved you from the love of hatred. Hatred of even the detestable lowers the striving divinity within man.

Akin to their insistence upon love as the law of life, were their explanations of life's sorrows and miseries.

EVIL.

Q.—Can you give us any information in regard to the so-called devil—once so firmly believed in?

A.—Devil is a word used to conjure with.

Q.—Well then, as the word itself doubtless arose from the word evil, which means to us unhappiness, can you give us an explanation of the existence of evil?

A.—Evil—as you who are the greatest sufferers from it, name one of the conditions of progress—is as necessary, aye, more so, than what you call good, to your and our elevation to higher spheres. It is not to be hated but welcomed. It is the winnowing of the grain from the chaff. Children of truth, don't worry over what to you seems evil: soon you will be of us and will understand and be rejoiced that what you call evil persists and works as leaven in the great work of mind versus matter.

Q.—But it seems to us impossible that brutal crimes like murder, assassinations or great catastrophies, by which the innocent are made to suffer at the hands of malicious and cruel persons, should work for ultimate good?

A.—Percipients of the grand whole of Being, can understand but may not state to those on your plane the underlying good making itself asserted even through such dreadful manifestations of human imperfections as the crimes you name.

When asked why certain wrongs were allowed to be perpetuated, this answer was given:

There is a law of psychical essence which makes necessary all these ephemeral entanglements which to you seem so severe, and you will yet see from your own standpoint of reason why such hardships must be endured by questioning souls on the highway of progress.

Q.—But do you from your vantage ground of larger knowledge grow careless that such injustice is done?

A.—We do care, but cannot remedy.

Q.—Why can't you remedy?

A.—Because humanity is but an embryo of existence.

Q.—Do you on your plane have immunity from the griefs and ills which we here are obliged to endure?

A.—Life here, while akin to and an evolutionary outcome of the life which you are now passing through, is on a wholly different subjectivity. There are evils and what may be termed troubles with us; but they are far from the unbearableness of the sorrows earth-souls are necessarily called upon to endure. Our deepest griefs come from our sympathy with your evanescent troubles.

Q.—Are we to understand that you who now address us have reached the highest sphere attainable?

A.—Ah, no! Nor do we care to until we have trod the lower rounds of the ladder of being.

Q.—If you can perceive the trials and sorrows of mortals and can interfere to save them, why do you not more often do so?

A.—When undeveloped souls pay the price of development, we stand aloof and let the play go on. Interference will do no good.

PROPHECY.

Q.—Is prophetic vision sometimes given to mortals?

A.—Ecstatic states, so-called, are given to those on your plane sometimes, wherein that which is planned for good of humanity may be promised.

Q.—Are we then to understand that everything is foreordained?

A.—No. Everything is not ordained; man himself gives some marked power to direct.

Q.—Do spirits, perceiving causes hidden from us, foresee coming events that are beyond our prescience?

A.—Partially do human banded possibilities somehow define their course to certain spirits who make study of the laws underlying defined orbits.

Q.—Are those persons who are the mediums for prophetic utterances usually the most intellectual and far-seeing?

A.—No, their very weakness makes them reflectors of higher thought, wider knowledge.

Q.—Why are there so many predictions made through mediums which prove false?

A.—Wonderful guesses are sometimes made by daring spirits.

Q.—Is it not true that necessity prevails in the mental, as well as in the physical order?

A.—Thought-force goes ever in ordained lines. Your theory as seen from earthly standpoints is convincing, but from our point of view facts are gained which would materially alter your ideas.

Q.—Can you give us intimation of some of these facts?

A.—Mortal sense cannot know. Good-night.

Q.—Can you tell us anything of the future?

A.—Pharos says you must not ask questions of the future—spirits who prophesy are not good spirits.

Q.—Why?

A.—Because the Great One gives not true divination to his children, who must grow—

Q.—Do you mean that it is not best for us to know the future?

A.—Souls on your plane are undergoing discipline, and it would cost more than it is worth to foretell the future of your state.

At another time the following apparently contradictory statement was made by another writer:

Q.—What is your idea as to prophecy? Can some human beings foresee the future?

A.—Those ideal thoughts which every sincere soul embraces as truth may become embodied in some form in human beings, and may have power to warn and to prophesy.

In somewhat the same line of thought is what was written in regard to prayer and faith cures.

POWER OF PRAYER.

Q.—Will our friends tell us whether from their point of view there is any real efficacy in prayer?

A.—Shall not "a soul's sincere desire" arouse in discarnate and free spirits effort to make that pure desire a reality? What good can come from aspirations on mortal planes, save through the efforts to make those aspirations realized on spiritual planes by the will of freed spirits.

Q.—What are the essential spiritual conditions of true answer to prayer?

A.—Show thou why prayer is ever answered save through love for assertive mortal minds who are so spiritual in thought and longing as to force our sympathetic souls into helpful converse with them.

Q.—Then our active material life is not favorable to spiritual help?

A.—Spiritual life has not gained any help from material sources save in the way of ephemeral

conditions by reason of the sphere which is desirous to communicate.

Q.—What is the essential truth as to the efficacy of prayer ?

A.—Soul answereth to soul because of spiritual oneness, and strength comes by reason of unity of purpose and will.

Q.—Do our strong desires uttered, or unuttered influence spirit friends or forces, and react upon us in accomplishment of our wishes ?

A.—Zones of spiritual sympathies are here of strong prevailment, and when spirits who are yet clothed in mortal vestments powerfully prevail through sympathetic energy, those in rapport with them in our sphere are obliged to aid.

Q.—What is the chief agency in the cures effected at Lourdes, France, under the auspices of the Catholic Church ?

A.—Thought.

Q.—Please simplify your answer.

A.—Thought means so much! You are not yet able to grasp the word in its supreme sense—you pride yourselves on what you think you know; poor primary pupils in the world of spirit! how shall we who are but little in advance of you explain that which we have learned since our transition?

Q.—Is the Thought which produces the cures at Lourdes chiefly on our side, or your side of being?

A.—Spirit works as strongly on your side when conditions are powerful, as on our side—and very often spirits in mortal frames when in harmony with the workings of the Essence of Being, change by divine impulse the outcome of sense laws.

ABOUT CHRISTIAN SCIENCE.

Q.—Are the claims of so-called Christian scientists true, that they have the power to overcome matter by force of mind, and so can cure disease?

A.—Don't ask about conditions which are misunderstood and misunderstood because those who seek to know make blunders in the direction of truth.

Q.—If Christian science does cure disease, how is it accomplished ?

A.—Spirit and matter are two phases or aspects of one harmonious divinity, and when spirit is in the ascendant, matter loses its dominant power on your plane, and pain, which is the sense development of matter, is temporarily conquered.

Q.—Is it not just as true that pleasure is a sense development of matter, as that pain is ?

A.—No—Pleasure is the higher and monistic prerogative of both mind and matter, and is independent of matter. Pain is the legitimate accompaniment of matter. But until we meet you cannot understand.

Q.—Is mind-reading, as we understand it, possible between those still in the flesh ?

A.—Spirit clothed in sense vestments is still most truly spirit. Atoms, of the great All of Being (which you name God, but which to our clearer yet bounded perceptions is still unnamed) because of unison with mind everywhere, are possessed of spiritual power.

It must be remembered that the parties asking the questions in regard to Christian science had no belief in or bias toward that phase of thought, and the replies were against their preconceptions.

THEOSOPHY.

Q.—What is your opinion of Theosophy ?

A.—Theosophy as you ought to understand contains considerable truth and considerable error.

Q.—Is there any truth in what theosophists claim, that long ago men lived who were much wiser than we are to-day ?

A.—Long ago men were eager as they caught such glimpses of truth as conditions made possible and grew anxious to reach immediately concrete things, and came to conclusions hastily. Those conclusions having their base in truth they considered final, whereas they are only the beginnings of a long course of lessons. Impatience is one of the greatest impediments to progress in conveying to your minds what we are anxious to give you evidence of.

Q.—Your reply does not seem to us a clear answer to our question?

A.—Ah, don't you understand that we can't assimilate our thoughts to your vagaries? We could explain, if you understood our nomenclature but every environment has its language, and ours is altogether different from what you are accustomed to—later, we will try, dear children, to make clear what is obscure. We understand your limitations.

Another time when a different mind seemed present I asked in regard to what truth there might be in Theosophy, when the following answer entirely opposed to my own convictions was written, which I give as received while personally disbelieving its correctness:

A.—As one who is in sympathy with every effort of humanity to perfect itself, I must endorse the theosophical creation. Bigotry will forever retard progress on spiritual planes.

Again,

Q.—Can you tell us which is nearest the truth, Theosophy or Spiritualism?

A.—Both Theosophy and Spiritualism contain germs of soul truth, but your sphere is so enwrapped with phantasms that we who are cognizant of

Being's realities may not spiritually explain what to us is very clear.

Q.—Are there such persons living in the flesh as Mahatmas—as claimed by Theosophists ?

A.—Thinkers overestimate those spiritually minded souls who have given themselves to study of spiritual matters.

Q.—But, answer us more specifically : Are there in the Mountains of Thibet such apparently wonderful characters as Theosophists declare—with chelas, etc ?

A.—One grain of truth in a mountain of misconception is often sufficient among mortals to create strange misapprehensions—and though there are favored students of spiritual mysteries in India, their power and attainments are gravely misunderstood and overestimated.

The curious thing about this answer is that it is directly opposed to my own personal belief.

It will be observed in the spirit teachings given in this and other chapters that scriptural phraseology is frequently used, and I wish specially to call attention to this fact, which is the more strange because neither of the persons assisting in getting these answers has any predeliction for that style of composition, nor the least adeptness at using it. To me personally whose hand does the writing, the use of this rapidly-written phraseology is one of the convincing proofs of the origin of these communications.

CHAPTER IX.

SPIRIT TEACHINGS—[CONTINUED.]

RELIGION.

Q.—Will you answer questions this evening concerning Religion?

A.—We are very glad you have opened that question, and if you will propound the points which from your earthly point of view are most pertinent, we will answer.

Q.—Will you give us a general philosophical definition of Religion?

A.—Religion, as you term the science of Being, is Spirit—what existence comprises, and we who comprehend the phases of life which you primary school pupils cannot do, best know what Religion means. Religion phrases man's dimly defined recognition of the unity of Being—the Oneness of that which counts as many in the refracted images of your ideas.

Q.—What is the distinctive difference between Religion and Morality?

A.—Shared with still another force, that of control of Spirit by willing on the part of best of atomistic development, called humanity, Religion is the gold separated from the alloy of selfishness.

Q.—Then what is Morality?

A.—Morality is the body of which Religion is the Soul.

Q.—Is Religion in a low form consistent with absence of moral ideals and conduct?

A.—Spiritually considered your question must be answered negatively, but from a merely worldly estimation, the affirmative would be best.

Q.—What do you say of the sincere religious

belief of savage, or criminal minds, that by appeals to the Unseen, seek to obtain aid in evil purposes?

A.—What we have to say is in entire consonance with your human experience, that mere belief, without sincere and pure desire for the good of all, is of no avail.

Q.—You often in these communications speak of the binding laws of spiritual life—that because of them you cannot give us such and such information, etc. Now, who makes those laws, and whence came they, and how are they taught?

A.—Thou 'say'st "who"—therefore we cannot answer. Go back to the first question and ask one at a time.

Q.—Well, who makes the laws?

A.—Spirits are not bondaged by *persons*.

Q.—Then how do you come to know those laws?

A.—Pharos will now answer. Spiritual laws are spiritually perceived as soon as the physical perceptions are got rid of.

Q.—Could you explain to us those laws?

A.—Courses of teaching from our side are as necessary for you to understand even the rudimentary laws of Being, as courses in your colleges; and guessed at spirit knowledge from your bounded view must always fail in accurate wording.

ABOUT JESUS.

I may preface what follows from the thought of our unseen friends with the statement that personally I do not accept the Christian theory of the special divinity of Jesus of Nazareth, but something previously written by my hand made me think our friends thought of him differently from myself, which caused me to ask as follows:

Q.—Do you accept Jesus as a model of spiritual knowledge?

A.—Shall you give us a better example?

Q.—Well, we are willing to accept him as one of many, but not as chief.

A.—Change the name. Call him by other names —Buddha, Chrishna or Mohammed, the spirit is one —is ever and ever the same. Spirit is one, not many, however often the name is changed.

Q.—Were not Jesus, Buddha and Mohammed distinct personalities?

A.—No more than all atoms emanating from the same source—parts of the great All of Being, partaking of the general characteristics of the grand whole—but yielding to environments, showed marked individualism, such as the force of the times in which they appeared would create in their characters.

Q.—Are these leaders of religious thought not distinct individualties now?

A.—No, not on spiritual planes which do not recognize any now.

Q.—What was the essential point of difference between the characters of Buddha and Jesus?

A.—One—Buddha—was of the governing class. He for love of the Race lowered himself to the level of the lowliest sufferer. Jesus was of the people. He raised the standard of morality, so that both high and humble could march under the one banner.

Q.—Wherein was Buddha mistaken as to his mission?

A.—Misconceptions are the legitimate outcome of earth's undeveloped phase of life, of being. Buddha, like many other earthly philosophers had caught a gleam, but only a gleam, of Divine Truth. He acted promptly upon the light shown, but as that light could be but partial, he made mistakes as all humanity is liable to.

Q.—In what respect was Jesus misled?

A.—Christ Jesus built up his faith on the Jewish

promise of a messiah who would govern this earthly plane—by Love, as he understood; by Force of Almighty Power, as the ignorant Jews thought.

Q.—What was the real character of Christ?

A.—Spiritual servitor, misunderstood and maligned.

I am tempted to add here a little coincidence. Just as I had finished transcribing the above, I took up for another purpose an old copy of the *Religio Philosophical Journal*, and the first words which caught my eyes were the following written by Mr. J. O. Woods, which is so pertinent that I copy it:

As we have almost an infinity of thoughts there may be likewise an infinity of divine creations or words. The Christ or Love word ever works or sacrifices himself in his creation, lifting it to a higher life through love, the law of its nature. We say:

Christ or Love is sacrifice,
Christ in various form and guise
Is slain for man from all eternity;
When we others' sorrows share
When we others' burdens bear,
'Tis Jesus still ascending Calvary.

REINCARNATION.

It has not infrequently happened that statements entirely opposite to my own belief, wish and convictions have been made by the intelligence guiding my hand. Before I began these experiments I had no real belief in continued existence, in spirit communication and other things to which I have been converted solely through these writings for which my own hand has been used. But some-

times still, statements are made as to theories really repugnant to my mind. Such for instance as those in regard to reincarnation, and I will here give some of these, showing how a theory to which I am personally opposed may be argued by what some people still insist must be my sub-conscious self.

Q.—Will you state whether there is any truth in the theory of reincarnation?

A.—Thou askest as all born of woman ask, to know before spiritual knowledge is gained, the questions pertaining to spheres beyond yours.

Q.—Then you refuse to give answer to that question—one which disturbs many mortal minds?

A.—Incarnation means spirit clothed with matter. Reincarnation should convey the idea that the clothing was outgrown before the spirit attained maturity. Seest thou the soul's prescience of spiritual possibilities?

Q.—Do you mean that it is among spiritual possibilities, that a soul which has not, in one mortal incarnation, attained spiritual maturity may again be incarnated, but that it is not always a necessity?

A.—Such would seem to be a necessary conclusion.

Q.—Will you give us anything further in regard to reincarnation?

A.—Subject not to be explained to you as yet.

Again:

Q.—Are not Jesus and Buddha, and in fact all other human beings who have lived on earth still distinct individuals?

A.—Look around among your many individualities on your plane at the present time. Canst thou mark one who has not been beforetime asserted in some other form?

Q.—Is that statement an intimation of the truth of reincarnation?

A.—Souls of all who have preceded you two, are centered in you in spite of your childish protests. Ask not of those predecessors, for they yet live in you and you live in them.

Again: In such intimations as the following which I must frankly say seem to me nonsensical. At the close of some argumentative words from Mr. U. in regard to a statement from that source, was written:

A.—Long ago you could argue no better on self-evident truths than you do now.

B. F. U.—What do you mean by that statement?

A.—Long ago you and I went over the ground under eminent names.

Q.—What were the eminent names—will you tell us?

A.—Cannot, for it would seem nonsense to you both.

And again:

A.—Were we not together when Socrates and Aspasia talked?

Once when Mr. U. asked,

Q.—Will you explain to us the law by which you can make use of Sara's hand to write your thoughts?

A.—Sara is a helper because former generations are sublimated in her individuality. She has to express ages of protest in direct lines. She is a representative of long lines. She is the voice of generations of which she knows little,

Now to those who do not personally know me the above will assuredly seem the inflated expres-

sion of self-conceit. They who do know me will well understand how distasteful such oracular utterances must be, to one who dislikes pretension of any sort. I should blush for myself even if only in the presence of my husband were I capable of saying this of my own accord. But I am puzzled *why* such a statement should be made, since all I know of "protest in direct lines" of my own ancestry is the fact of the Scotch Covenanters from whom on one side I am descended.

I am sometimes inclined to believe that many of our friends on the other side have not entirely lost their sense of humor by the fact of transition from earth-form, and like to test the self-conceit of mortals by making statements in the above vein. I give this only for its hint of reincarnation, a theory to which I am heartily opposed. It is very distasteful to me, and assuredly if the matter was left to my decision I would by no means consent to accept another trial of this existence, not under the most favorable conditions possible.

Occasionally one writer will, however, impliedly contradict what has been said by another. What I have already given in regard to possible reincarnation was from our usual "control," but when we were receiving a communication from a person recently deceased who was a strong materialist in earth-life he referred to a very intimate friend of his who, once sharing his materialistic or agnostic views, had become a convert to Theosophy. We asked if while he knew her on earth if she had privately even to him expressed belief in future existence. The reply was :

A.—She one day said to me, "B— do you see any foundation for a hope anywhere of a future life?" I answered no; but she held that hope, and to-day I am glad for her sake that she gets nearer the truth than I did. But she is still somewhat astray,

Q.—In what consists her mistake from your present point of view?

A.—She accepts the reincarnation theory; she mistakes spiritual knowledge for sense-perceptions, and lowers the power of spirit-return by ascribing it to mortal knowledge.

THE SUB-CONSCIOUS EGO.

Q.—What is the sub-conscious ego?

A.—Your ideas are all wrong.

Q.—Please give us then your ideas of the so-called sub-conscious ego.

A.—So-called—that is, consciously understood on your plane. There is no sub-conscious ego from our point of view. There are multiplex egos conceived through one sense organism when that organism is multiplex in formation and design.

Q.—Are these multiplex egos so many distinct personalities or spirits?

A.—Soul atoms which go to make the all of Being.

Q.—Do you know about the case of Ansel Bourne?

A.—Take the case of Lurancy Vennum.

Q.—Well, in that case were there two distinct souls manifested through one body?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Where was the first inhabitant of that body when the second took possession?

A.—Lurancy and Mary were but two phases of one individuality, common-place and easily assimilable.

Q.—They seemed to be two distinct persons. Did they have a deeper underlying common personality ?

A.—When you come over on our side the Veil you will understand that planes of Being make common-place individuals all as one, and those of no great persistence can easily adopt sympathetic forms.

The answer seemed vague and contradictory, and the question was asked :

Q.—Have you anything further to say as to the so-called sub-conscious ego ?

A.—Purblind scientists are at fault, but their inquiries are of use. Over on our plane we are not quite sure as to the philosophical answer to the question.

Q.—When can you give us a more definite answer ?

A.—Friday evening, after consultation. Good-night.

Q.—Wait a little, I want to ask another question.

A.—What ask ye ?

Q.—Whom do you call purblind scientists ?

A.—Whom do you call clear-sighted scientists ?

Those who observe correctly, state clearly what they see and know, and do not indulge in assumptions about matters of which they know nothing, I replied.

A.—Name such.

Q.—Darwin, Tyndall, Humboldt ?

A.—Darwin spiritually was decidedly purblind with all honesty of purpose. Tyndall is stubbornly purblind, because of limitation of research. Humboldt was imprisoned in sense perceptions and necessarily purblind.

Q.—Don't you sometimes characterize as purblind those who ask questions difficult to answer?

A.—Difficult to answer to those whose spiritual vision is confined to sense limitations.

A DISCUSSION ON "WILL."

One evening I particularly wished to have some special questions of my own answered, and since generally a preference was shown for questions propounded by Mr. U. I so stated at the beginning, when the reply came at once denying my request in this form: "Thou art near to us, but we most wish to reach Bhama." This name so strangely given to Mr. U. is used, however, only by certain writers, "Pharos," and one or two others whose names I do not care to state, because I personally demur at such names being given, and do not like to publish them as it would at least look like assumption on my part to those who do not yet understand that my own intelligence does not in the least guide this writing. On this occasion I yielded to the expressed wish of our unseen visitors and asked Mr. U. to question them.

Q.—Can you explain human will, and wherein consists its greatest power?

A.—Will, spiritually defined, means that which you mortals name spirit power.

Q.—What is the function or power of will?

A.—Shared with mortal concepts we cannot give you the explanation of the true power, or the real function of will. Will is a spiritual attribute, and only those on spiritual planes can understand its esoteric or bounded meaning.

Q.—Is not the function of will the power to determine between two or more motives?

A.—Thou shalt soon perceive that will means mortal longings and desire. Spiritual answers to queries regarding will must be of most value when the physical desires of will are most surely eliminated. Will means only man's most intense desire; will is as strong physically as spiritually, and is only helpful when exerted most strongly in behalf of the higher longings of Spiritual man.

Q.—Approaching a point from which two or more roads or paths diverge, does not the will determine which one the traveler takes?

A.—There comes in the question of the greater and lesser will—the mortal individual will formulates the path seemingly most direct, but the larger, more comprehensive will directs and guides the mind into ways all undreamed of, but the most helpful and in the end, the best.

Q.—The will then determines the course, does it not?

A.—There is but one supreme will—that of the All-of-Being—of which mortal man's will is but the faint reflex. Spiritually viewed, the mirror of a mirror wherein is reflected dimly the fiat of Eternal Being.

Q.—It follows from this, does it not, that all thought and conduct of finite creatures are necessitated—determined by the universal will?

A.—Necessitated, but not determined. Determination must come from the finite which is left the veto power. Thou should'st understand that the infinite is mirrored in the finite, and man is measurably the arbiter of his own spiritual destiny.

Q.—Is there then any veto power of the universal will of which man's will is but the reflection?

A.—No. There may seem to be to mortal mind. but the Soul of Being guides all—whether physical or spiritual.

Q.—Then necessity, as Shelley says, is the mother of the world?

A.—Soul of mortal birth! Try to understand thy limitations—thy questions touch on mysteries impossible to be understood on your plane. The most straightforward answer to your common sense question would not be understood by you while you remain on the earth plane. Some lessons are still reserved for scholars in the higher grades of Being. Don't arrogate to your plane all knowledge.

Q.—But the doctrine of necessity follows logically and unavoidably from your foregoing statement it appears to me?

A.—Shall not your ideas of logic change with the wider knowledge of the laws of being which you shall gain when you escape earthly limitations?

Q.—That is doubtlessly true. But we are now very tired. Before we close will you make appointment for another sitting, and at what date?

A.—Sunday eve, Oct. the ——, the band will come.

On the evening designated we sat again and Mr. U. resumed the previous discussion:

Q.—How can Universal Will determine all action and yet individual will be free?

A.—Shared with Universal Will the materialistic individual will must be sympneumatically in league with the Universal Will, and therefore must determine its course according to the greater Universal Will.

Q.—Is it true that the Universal Will, having a definite end, may leave open several courses thereto, and yet leave a choice to the individual mind which of these courses shall lead to the determined end?

A.—Soul questions like unto these may not be

answered by dogmatic assertions, but when spirit planes are changed, and larger areas of knowledge are opened, your pertinent queries shall be sensibly and spiritually answered. You are yet spiritually too much in bondage to sense to be specifically answered.

Q.—Please state in your own way the best thought in regard to absolute determinism and free will?

A.—Spiritually considered the best thought in regard to absolute determinism is that souls on your limited plane may not be able even to guess what the most advanced spiritual definition of absolute determinism—a most absurd terminology—may mean. Free will! How ridiculous in the light of sure knowledge only gained on high spiritual planes, will seem your material assumptions in self-seeking phraseology in regard to free will and predestination.

And with this statement they closed further discussion of the question.

MAN'S BEING.

Q.—Was man created, or has he existed eternally?

A.—Created beings, only mean conditions of an entity.

Q.—Can you give us an idea of what Being really is, in a short sentence?

A.—Being can't be explained in an aphorism. Longing to answer your sensible questions we are yet debarred by conditions which are not explainable in your limited language. Man's being is not as you fancy some atom by itself, but parts of one great whole.

Q.—Will you give us from your standpoint of knowledge a definition of three words,—"body," "soul," and "spirit?" First, "body."

A.—"Body," as we understand the word, means a temporary condition of what you name, "matter," necessary to development of soul.

Q.—What, then, is "soul?"

A.—"Soul" is the ego,—the individualization of an atom of the great unity, spirit.

Q.—And how do you define "spirit?"

A.—"Spirit" is the All of Being,—inexplicable to those in the body: you must come up higher to understand.

Q.—What do you mean by the "atoms of unity?" How can there be such, when each atom is in itself a whole—a unity?

A.—E Pluribus Unum.

An extremely appropriate answer, — "One formed of many."

Q.—Is the universe in its ultimate nature monistic or dualistic?

A.—Triunism, not monism nor dualism, is the law of the Great Whole of whose greatness ye have, so far, no conception.

Q.—Explain to us the trinity which makes the grand whole?

A.—Spirit—matter—and what you call motion.

CHAPTER X.

SPIRIT TEACHINGS—[CONTINUED.]

NAMES.

Although in the beginning of these writings the thought was often common-place, as of minds not possessing a markedly high degree of intelligence, and scores of names were written, many of them unknown to us, but common names; yet after our insistence upon replies to questions which were impersonal, writing of a higher order was perceived to take the place of the common-place and promiscuous, and then curiously enough only a few names would be given; but generally was shown a disposition to refuse to give names. As we were curious to know why, there resulted such answers as the following to our questions:

Q.—We would like to know the names of those spirits now present?

A.—Names with us are of but little account and we grow to ignore them.

Q.—Why are names so often apparently forgotten in receiving messages from those who ought to remember them?

A.—Because the one thing necessary to spiritual development is ignoring of the ego—the self mind. The mind universal, the spirit of abnegation, the uprooting of vanity and selfishness is here most desired.

Q.—Why are false names frequently given?

A.—Love, the great Alchemist, amalgamates in its crucible all mind-matter worthy of perpetuation,

and in this amalgamation many small individualties are lost; but ever when sought for diligently by blinded seekers for light, the semblance to individual relationship seems to melt into what seems false.

Q.—Do family names and affinities persist?

A.—Years gone by this question was seriously discussed among us and this conclusion was reached: that names with you were but the signs of tribal relations between those of mere blood-relationship; here, blood relationship does not count, and spirit sympathies come always to be classified by new readings.

At another sitting:

Q.—Will our invisible friends write for us tonight?

A.—We are ready to answer such inquiries as your common sense suggests should be asked, when you remember the limitations of our different conditions.

Q.—Will you give your name?

A.—It cannot be reasonably argued that a name emphasizes ideas. The one object of importance in our plane is the supremacy of ideas to mere superficial appearances.

Again:

Q.—Why are incorrect, false, or no answers at all given to some of our questions?

A.—Brother, wisdom is not unmixed with us any more than with you. Undeveloped souls will continue here to exhibit their shortcomings as they do when with you; nor are such anarchistic spirits to be repressed at once here any more easily than when in the flesh. We can only pity and teach.

Q.—Who is it gives so good an answer?

A.—One whose life was devoted to teaching—

one who sympathizes, but whose name does not matter.

Q.—What names known to us, of those who in the past were on earth, are accounted among your greatest thinkers?

A.—Individualities are here overwhelmed in the All of Good. We don't care to give names to bolster up universal thinkers' quotients.

Once the following question was put:

Q.—Why do we not oftener get messages from the relatives we call for.

A.—Bonds of sympathetic being are stronger than relationship over here. Many whose silence you wonder at were not in true accord with you, and so are not now in rapport with you—true lines of sympathy are drawn over here.

B. F. U.—Who writes thus ?

A.—Your friend, who will introduce himself when you come,—who now enjoys your broad views even of this plane of which you know so little.

Q.—What is your name ?

A.—Please don't ask.

B. F. U.—How came you to know of us ?

A.—Why, my friend, here many times I am an interested listener to the questions asked of those who are given the opportunity to communicate to you through your mediumistic wife, and keenly enjoy your shrewd questionings of those who to you seem phantasms—spirits. Good-night.

S. A. U.—I wish to ask if any of my relatives are present ?

A.—Your relatives are those of all thinkers. "Who are my mother and my brethren ?" asked Christ—so may you and your soul mate.

Q.—Can you give us a name by which to designate your plane ?

A.—Sharon.

Q.—Why Sharon ?

A.—Sharon's name signifies peace and pleasantness.

I am not aware that "Sharon" means anything particular—so don't know just what that answer signifies, if anything.

"PHAROS."

While on the topic of names, I may appropriately here explain more in detail about the very significant name Pharos given as that of the guide or control of the writing of these later messages. Although I had noted for sometime that the writing began to be more uniform, as well as of a higher trend of thought, I gave no especial heed to this until, as I have before mentioned, a friend whose experiences had been similar to mine and beginning about the same time, wrote me after we had exchanged specimens of the communications, that she fancied the same mind formulated both her automatic writing and mine, and, giving me the name said to be that of her "control," requested that at our next sitting I should ask the question, which I did, while not really believing that there was any one control in my own case. The reply was that our controls were altogether different minds. "Is there any one mind who does control the writing in my case?" I asked. The reply was in the affirmative. "What is the name of that control?" I asked. "Pharos" was written.

It was then a word wholly unknown to me, and I wondered if there was really such a name or word. My surprise may be guessed when I found the word, and its signification given as "in general

a lighthouse, beacon, watch-tower!" Could any name be more appropriate than that—for indeed the communications of my dear friend "Pharos" have thrown most illuminating rays of light upon many subjects for me. The encyclopedias consulted show that lighthouses were thus named from the first light-bearing tower built by Ptolemy Philadelphus, B. C. 300 on the Island of Pharos at the entrance of the port of Alexandria. It was built of white marble and was accounted one of the seven wonders of the world.

Shortly after my discovery of the meaning of Pharos, when the name was again written I said: "O, yes—I remember—you mean you are in a sense a lighthouse to my understanding!" "Light tower" was then written as a correction. Later, I asked, "What does Pharos stand for in your own view?" The answer was "Souls of all who illumine—goodness, charity, love, spiritual desire, aspiration, work for others, forgetfulness of self, magnanimity, unworldliness—these are all Pharos, or light-bearers.

At the time I first asked about the one in control, and received the name "Pharos," I further questioned as to the control of my friend who inclining to theosophic theories fancied the name S. given, a pseudonym of a living thinker.

Q.—Is S. a living person?

A.—Pharos says yes. We are all more alive than when going through your terrestrial trial sphere.

Q,—Will you please state something definite regarding S.? Who was or is he?

A.—S. was and is a thinker who believed while with such as you that there existed worlds or spheres of Thought—soul planes where Mind would dominate over Matter, and where solution could be found for the vexing problems of and concerning Being, propounded by the most astute thinkers of earth.

Q.—But by what name was he known while here?

A.—E. was the earth name of him who has taken here the name of S.

Q.—What is the bond of sympathy between S. and our friend through whom he writes?

A.—Starting point of spiritual philosophy touches Egypt.

The friend spoken of is one much interested in archæology, and especially in Egyptian lore.

It will be perceived that there is here a hint that in spirit spheres new names are adopted by those who have left sense relations behind them. This occurred at various times.

SEX.

At different sittings occasional hints were conveyed in communications, of change in sex relations as the individual spirits evolved to higher spheres. Those communicating generally spoke of themselves in the plural "we."

One evening we asked:

Q.—What spirits are present?
A.—Pharos, your soul friend.
Q.—Of which sex is Pharos?
A.—Both; spirit knows no sex.
Q.—What attracts you toward us?
A.—Bond of spirit born of sorrow.

At another time I said: "I don't know whether to speak of Pharos as 'he' or 'she.' Will you tell me which is proper?"

As there are no sex conditions over on our plane, Pharos is "him" to you—"her" to B. F. Underwood.

Again we asked:

How are the sexes divided on your plane?

A.—Ghosts of soul-forces cannot claim sensual sex characteristics.

Q.—Can they claim intellectual sex characteristics?

A.—Sex does not dominate spiritual planes. Sex is a sense attribute.

Q.—Is there any truth in the symptneumatic theory of Lawrence Oliphant and others that there was at first no male or female, but a biune personality?

A.—Sex was not until deterioration began.

Q.—Did that deterioration begin in spirit life or on this plane?

A.—Best of all that was designed showed sympathy with the lower orders of animalistic forms, and the Power that projected being limited was balked of its purer aims.

Q.—Can you give us an idea of what that Power was? Was it primordial or secondary?

A.—Sense perceptions and sense languages may not explain to you what to us is, oh, how clear!

At another time reference was made to some public meeting I had attended a day or two previously, and I asked if the writer had been present there:

A.—Round you were gathered an interested set of women and men spirits who were in accord with various speakers.

Q.—You mention women and men spirits—then sex prevails in your sphere as in ours?

A.—Yes, there is sex here, but not in the sense you understand.

When I inquired as to their exact position as individual beings on their own plane, we received the following:

A.—We are anxious to question you as to what you think of our claim that we are discarnate spirits who are yet not angels as your mind portrays such ideals. Phase of life, such as you are undergoing, gives no answer to spiritual queries.

MISCELLANEOUS TEACHINGS.

Q.—What are so-called materializations?

A.—Creations of mind and no real creatures. Physical man wants more substantial proof of continued existence than he has yet found, so spiritual man plays on his mind, and we manage to show him phantasms of his own being, which he takes for materializations.

Q.—Can you, as is sometimes claimed, foretell future events?

A.—When strong passion is at work on a wicked mind, we here are sometimes able to cognize and work out the natural outcome. So we take pains to impress on the minds accessible to us the coming horror, hoping thus they may be able to avert the catastrophe.

Q.—Do ghosts of the murdered ever haunt the place where the event occurred?

A.—Phantasms of those whose minds were so awfully shocked, reacting strongly on all other minds within their range of influence.

Q.—Is what is called obsession a possible occurrence?

A.—We think it possible that some of our spirits

—mischievous ones—might take advantage of a weak mortality to enter temporarily the evanescent frames of such, and so assert their power.

Q.—Are some mediums, as they claim, able to cure disease by your aid?

A.—Some are so constituted that they can be of physical usefulness. All souls are not cast in the same molds any more than bodies are.

Q.—Can you explain to us how the intellect is developed in man? Is it an evolution of lower forms of intellect in animals?

A.—Bear in mind that your too readily accepted theory of evolution takes on trust a great deal not borne out in fact.

Q.—Are not instinct, conscience and intuition evolutions from lower types of mind?

A.—Animal instinct as you guess is the beginning of conscience, and so-called intuition; but instinct and intuition are in fact of spiritual birth.

Q.—What is it fixes the limit of manifestation in different individuals?

A.—The limit is fixed by the yet misunderstood laws of life. Your ideas of evolution are not true.

Q.—Is man an evolution in body and mind from lower forms of life?

A.—Won't you state precisely your question? The great mistake you make is classing man with lower forms of being.

Q.—But the law of evolution seems unmistakably to show that such is the fact?

A.—Yes, in bodily structure, but intellectual and ethical ideas cannot be traced from brute to man. There is where there is no link, there is where soul begins direct from All-Being.

Q.—What is the dividing line between brute and man?

A.—The knowledge of where 'ought,' and 'ought not' begins and ends.

Q.—But have not animals ideas in regard to right and wrong ? Dogs for instance ?

A.—No ideas—they have knowledge through experience of the things which react in hurtfulness when persisted in.

Q,—But does not such knowledge indicate in a degree moral ideas ?

A.—A concept, but not a moral force.

Q.—Whence do man's moral ideas come, save from evolution ?

A.—From the source of All Being (of which you can have only the faintest concept) but thought not an evolution from animal to man, is still so pervasive as to have its shadow-like reflex images in the lower forms, as in animals, for instance.

Q.—Are our dominant sensuous appetites, feelings, or desires much changed by what we name death.

A.—Bred clandestinely within your sensuous consciousness, spirit still asserts its power, and where recognized may be able here to overcome without much warfare the dominant-sense appetites.

Q.—Does character, that is, moral and spiritual development, determine status after transition and not orthordox or heterodox belief ?

A.—Say we that character, that is, the real spiritual being, is the real part of spirit. Orthodox and heterdox are not known in our estimates.

B. F. U.—Lately when at Joliet I attended the Sunday service at the State's prison. It seemed to me that many of the faces of the criminals bore traces of goodness and intelligence. From your point of view are they much worse than other men ?

A.—Souls are they—some here in clearer, purer light take precedence of mortals who now think themselves far superior in moral worth.

Q.—Why are such stirrers-up of evil among

their fellows as X and Y allowed to exist and go on doing harm to so many innocent persons for so long a time ?

A.—Yonder comes a clairvoyant spirit who will give a hint as to the all-pervading Spark of vital power which keeps such as these who have no higher ideal, in physical existence.

Q.—What is the spirit's explanation ?

A.—Splendid germs are planted whose outcome by reason of poor soil filled with all sorts of mortal barrenness and spiritual dearth, sends forth such persistent roots of evil as those of whom ye speak.

Q.—Are your planes bound by any code of law, written or understood, as ours is ?

A.—Bound by very laws of laws. We here better understand than do those on your limited sphere why cause must precede—must forever bind effects. Why law must perceive events, and cause every seemingly trivial occurrence to become but a link in the onward chain of determined necessity for the good of the whole of humanity.

Q.—What was the relation between Kant and Hume ?

A.—Kant was aroused from his scholastic commonplaceness by the discovery that Truth could not be driven in ruts nor be formalized ; so he was driven to test formulas by reason. Ideas of so called holy men put to test by Hume's logical powers, showed so spurious in the light of common sense, that Kant was forced with many other thinkers to hew out a new path for his own awakened thought. His thought was nearer truth than Hume's.

Q.—Is not thought a process of conscious realization ?

A.—Thought is a word of more value than you on your plane have yet perceived. Sense believes

in sense perceptions, but to spirit, thought means the essence of man's egoism.

Q.—Why is rhythmic thought expression more common in spirit spheres than with us ?

A.—Because harmonious with the laws of Being are all spirits who evolve spiritually toward the Truth of existence, and therefore the trend of thought in such spirits is toward rhythmic expression. And spirit spheres are spheres of harmony, ever tending to blessed rhythmic expression.

Q.—As we evolve spiritually does our nature outgrow the beastly warring tendency ?

A.—Crucifixion of animal nature is the test of spiritual evolution and growth toward the light.

Q.—Is it not true that men may outgrow the more brute-like qualities, and yet be hard and harsh, mercenary and esthetically selfish ?

A.—Surely you do not understand what animalism means, or spirituality. To forego merely beastly enjoyments, does not by any means show the power of spiritual progress. The innate spiritual man shown through selfish yet esthetic tests, only panders to the animalism which is yet rampant within,

CHAPTER XI.

GOOD-NIGHT AND FRIENDLY MESSAGES.

Nearly always our sittings have been held rather late in the evening after we had put away work for the day, and when we were tired the communications were closed either by intimation from one of us, or suddenly by the intelligence writing. But there were usually a few words of good-night greeting exchanged as among friends when parting, and these were often so unique that I have thought it might be of interest to give some specimens in prose and rhyme. Occasionally I asked if they would not give us a versified thought before leaving; the following is in answer to such request:

Use with care thy spirit gifts,
  Clothe our thoughts in kindly words:
Bear in mind that what uplifts
  Thoughts to planes above the herds

Of common souls in farthest ken,
  Must be the spirit's nearest goal
Of doing good by us to men,
  Because of Spirit love of Soul.

And thus we give a sweet good-night
  To you and Bhama, consorts dear,
Whose spirits join us with delight
  And help us on with thoughts of cheer.

Once when we remarked that it was late, but if they had anything further to say we would receive it, this was written:

A.—Ghosts are going—and sense phantasms had better go to bed.

It struck me as a bit of retaliatory sarcasm to have them call us sense phantasms.

Another time the signal for closing came in this fashion :

Pharos sees Bhama's earth-body needs rest—good-night.

Again:

Ghosts are now nearly ready to say good-night.

Another rhymed good-night ran thus:

> Creatures of phantasmal gourds
> In whom we spirits find accords
> Within our deepest soul of souls,
> Though far from knowledge of our goals ;
>
> To you we gladly greetings send
> Sparked with moral purpose—end
> Of all things spiritual, which you
> May not yet understand—adieu.

The expression "phantasmal gourds" puzzled me, but apparently it was meant as a reflection upon the ephemeral nature of all earthly things.

Sometimes when Mr. U. too closely criticized some vague statement, the writers seemed to feel hurt, and on one such occasion closed the communication for that evening with the following:

We wish to say to B. F. U. that he had better sheathe his weapons, and we will part as friends—Bonds of friendship are strong on spiritual planes.

Still they did not hesitate on their part to speak of us as beings of less intelligence than themselves, and this feeling of superiority was frequently shown in their good-night words, of which I give here some instances:

Good-night, dear children of the Spirit, who yet know so little what ye are !
Good-night, poor mortals.
Good-night, spirit friends, still at school.
Good-night, dear children, who are to be brought yet nearer to our plane.

Good-night, and when our sphere you reach,
How strange will seem the lore we teach,
But glad we'll strive to show the way
To realms of universal day.

Again there would sometimes be shown a sense of wounded sensibilities, as at the close of an evening when Mr. U. had shown strong doubt of some assumptions on their part, their good-night was as follows, when I asked if they had not a special word for him in verse ere closing :

Bhama's will so sternly holds
Aloof from love, our spirit goals,
That we whose will as his is strong
Care not to question him through song.

When with ours his will shall blend ;
When philosophic lore shall tend
To teach him spirit wisdom, then
Our lines of friendly thought and ken

Shall show him where we both are right—
Shall teach him spirits may not fight—
Though argument with reason run,
For earthly knowledge here's outdone.

More frequently, however, they left us with some very loving message of adieu such as the following :

End of this séance—good-night ; in the future we shall be nearer and more intimate. Receive our earnest good wishes.
Blessings, dear one, and sweet sleep.
Our good-night burns with sympathetic love.

Good-night, and may all good wait upon you, dear children of truth.

Good-night, comrades and co-workers.

Good-night, dear ones.

Sweet shall be thy sleep and sound
Guardian spirits passing round
Loving thoughts on thee bestow
Whene'er they come, where'er they go.

And again :

Restful shall your slumbers be,
Dreams nor cares shall torture thee,
Life's hard tasks stand still awhile,
And spirits sweet all care beguile.

The foregoing was written at a time when troubled by various matters I had been unable for several nights to obtain any refreshing sleep, and as my worries were concerning persons at a distance from whom I could not hear immediately, when I did fall asleep I was haunted by distressing dreams about them; but on the night this was written I fell into an undisturbed, restful, dreamless sleep which lasted until morning. "Suggestion"—some will say. Well, perhaps.

There was ofttimes a deeper meaning than will appear to the reader as in the three following :

Shall not we, whose aim is one,
Gladly meet when sorrow's done,
Grasp with warmth of spirit-love
Hands and hearts which now we move?

Show you that in spirit spheres
Bonds of soul the spirit cheers;
And while you in earthly rounds
Seek to fathom spirit bounds,
Your search, your tests, your anxious thought,
By spirit powers are still enwrought.

Souls in true rapport here meet
Holding greeting short and sweet
Of spirits sympathetic given,
Communion betwixt earth and heaven.
We poet souls bring tender greeting
To those on earth's strange area meeting.

A characteristic good-night word is the following showing a sense of superior wisdom in the writers to us whom they addressed :

Shall not our prescience disclose
That spirit more than mortal knows,
More than you've gained of knowledge yet
Is beyond your plane so far offset
From ours where order reigns supreme,
And where more clear we spirits glean
From further spheres reflected bright
Through larger wisdom gives us light
Which on earth-plane is all unknown,
Yet to earth-souls some time'll be shown.
Be patient, spirits yet at school,
And know that Law is more than rule
Within the spheres ye dimly guess
As being within man's knowingness!
Farewell, dear children, for the nonce,
For from you now we go at once.

At another time when Mr. U. said he was tired, and had still other work to attend to, I asked for a good night word when these lines were swiftly written:

Bhama's warning words we hear,
So good night to you, our dear
And anxious friend, who soon shall gain
Advance in friendship with our train.

Good night to you, with kindest thought,
Soon further spirit lore deep fraught
With spirit love to you'll be brought.

Other ways of bidding us good night were these:

Good night—and sometime all these strange experiences will be understood.

Good night, and ever may we all grow in knowledge and goodness; so say we—all of us.

Sometimes there was evinced an unwillingness to close the communication when we announced that we desired to do so, and one wrote,

I go, but will expatiate fully, later.

And another,

Ever you make it hard to say good night.

Late one night I was very tired, and when Mr. U. proposed following up certain statements written with other questions, I told him I was too tired to continue, but as he already had asked a question I held the pen in position, we both expecting the reply to the question when the pen began to move —instead was written :

You said, yawning, that you could do no more—we could not think of attempting to overwork you.

I doubtless did yawn as I spoke, but without conscious thought of it. The question remained unanswered that evening.

I give here one of the longer poems with which our sittings were occasionally concluded :

SPIRIT VS. MATTER.

Shall not spirits on our plane
Show to those within earth's fane
Of Static law, how far below
Our lines of Rightness are the show
Earth's follies take within sense-bounds
Which Atomistic worlds surrounds.

Yet Pupils dear, we long to say
Some ardent loving word which they
Who've gained by strength of love and will
Our higher Sphere where sense is nil,
May hope to send some helpful thoughts
To those who count us spirits—naughts

Save phantasms of the earthly brain,
Which only serves us to obtain
From lower forms of spirit minds
Some hints of gyves by which earth binds
Such souls as yours from heavenly lore;
And makes us seem to you a bore.

Bhama says this is not so,
But has not he essayed to show
That our thought further cannot go
Than his sense-bounded queries trend
With their materialistic bend?

Show we to him how puerile, small,
Appears to us his questions all,
When asked within the bounded sphere
Of Matter, which he thinks, we fear—
The utmost bounds of wider thought
Which Spirit into order brought

By force of soul-power deeply fraught
With Spirit—which is All, or Naught
Let him say now—of Spirit taught—
Is Spirit best of all that's wrought?
Or shall the battle yet be fought
Between Spirit All, or Matter Naught?

Those who will in spite of all evidence to the contrary still contend that these often fault-finding hurriedly written verses are the outcome of my own intelligence, or of Mr. Underwood's and my own combined, must at least concede that it is certainly a strange, and as yet unexplained exhibition of human brain work, so coherently to combat its own recognized thought without conscious volition of the individual who is otherwise in an entirely normal every-day mood, but whose hand writes the words which, until they are written, have not been in the conscious mind of the writing hand's owner.

No one realizes more fully than I do that to all those who have had no personal experience in

securing rational communications from the Unseen, these we have given may seem fantastic and imaginative, but we have received so many messages of the most sensible and friendly sort from this source, that for myself I can no longer doubt the reality of these unseen individualities.

Doubtless were they able to give us true pictures of a life of which our present sense conditions afford no parallel, we would doubt the stories and their truth. Our communicants well understand this, as such expressions as the following show:

When we are confronted by such queries from thinkers on your lower plane we know not what to say, for *Law is Law*, and we may not answer your questions.

And again:

Wouldst thou not affirm that vagueness in spiritual communication argues as ghostly tales as old stories of witchcraft did, and you and Bhama, representatives of the scientific spirit of the age, refuse to consider spirit vouchers which your common but material sense thinks of no importance.

Often the sittings opened with some kind message such as:

Love you know, is the alchemist's test.

Ask of us questions born of love of humanity.

Charged with lovingness are the words we are told to send to you and other toilers.

Souls here are always in sympathetic accord with all who are in sympathy with our planes, whatever the difference between our views on the subjects discussed.

When after a long silence of some months I said

I had feared I was forgotten by them, but I hoped they were still friendly in spite of my remissness by reason of earthly cares—then at once came this:

Surely, dear child, we will willingly sparkle over your drear horizon giving you words of cheer and counsel.

Once they accused us of "sour words," toward them; but when we disclaimed any intention of being so understood, that while we spoke unthinkingly perhaps, we did not feel "sour" but cordial and kindly, this answer was returned.

Pharos says to his friends that better than Bhama knows or Sara thinks, we spirits understand mortal moods, therefore there is no hard feeling, but Pharos states that spirit language must be accepted as symbolizing all thought messages between your plane and ours. Pharos reciprocates your cordial spirit, but would suggest a less and less martial tone. All here have the greatest respect for our accepted brother and sister but we wish you were less controversial.

At another time when I myself had deprecated what I thought too great asperity and doubtfulness of Mr. U.'s questions, this reply, unexpected by me, was made:

You are assured that B. F. U.'s strongly squared, judicial and not sympathetic spirit seems worthy of careful answering by those who are on this plane.

Once when it was written that good work could be done in "the spiritual enlightenment of souls of mortals mourning their selfish sloughs, and charitable love of the weakly doubtful," I asked:

Q.—What do you mean by charitable love—are not love and charity synonymous?

A.—Spirit love is even more charitable than woman's earthly compassion.

I will close this chapter with another bit of their friendly verse:

Shall we whose love for you is shown
With forceful words and signs, which some
May think are neither sense nor wit,
Yet which both wit, and sense may hit
By ways of wit and also sense,
Of which there is no evidence
Save through our sympathetic friend,
Whose mediumship doth somehow trend
With our deeper spirit life;
Which spurs us on with friendly strife
To give from spirit spheres the sign
Of loving life, the seal divine
Which the All-Loving shows to those
Whose Life and Will in love repose.

CHAPTER XII.

CHARACTERISTIC COMMUNICATIONS.

Although most of the communications written through my hand are of an impersonal stamp, we not infrequently receive messages purporting to come from those of whom we had heard or read or whom we had personally known when in earth form. Most of these messages were written in Pharos' handwriting, yet the expression of thought seemed in keeping with the individuality represented so far as we understood. In this Chapter I reproduce some of these characteristic messages.

WORDSWORTH.

One evening we opened the sitting by asking,

Q.—What spirit will now communicate with us ?

A.—Wordsworth.

Q.—Ah, yes—you were the poet-prophet of spiritual life. Tell us what gave you the hope of immortality while yet on our plane ?

A.—Laugh as you may, the Soul of the Universe spoke to mine—a Spark of it—and gave me those intimations which helped me to bear with life's woes and absurdities; and through me many blinded mortals have caught glimpses of the Great Hope of poor suffering Humanity, that the Soul is all—but needs earth's discipline.

Q.—Upon what premises did you predicate your "Intimations of Immortality ?"

A.—Your words of disputation jar upon me [This referred to a momentary discussion between

Mr. U. and myself] but nevertheless I will answer. I based my hope—I received my intimations—I founded my expectations of immortal life upon the countless transformations seen in Nature, of passing changes from one phase of existence to another. The chrysalis and butterfly, the acorn and oak, the embryo forms of life preceding humanity.

S. A. U.—That is beautifully expressed—I trust you do not feel aggreived by my expressed annoyance when your name was written, for I was doubtful as to your identity.

A.—Born of woman, and free from earth's contentious phase, I understand the passing irritability and have nothing to forgive; good night, and sometime we may come still nearer.

SWEDENBORG.

Several times when questioned on matters of spiritual philosophy, the name Swedenborg was given as the one who answered. As I have previously explained I personally do not believe in the identity of such great characters with the intelligence replying, but I give a few illustrations of such names being written as true specimens of the communications coming to one who had no faith in their genuineness.

On one occasion Mr. U. asked:

Q.—What was the origin of organic forms?

A.—One will answer that question who gave consideration to such subjects on your sphere as well as here—coming soon.

After a short pause was written:

A.—Swedenborg—Emanuel Swedenborg will answer. Matter united with Spirit was at one

time supposed to combine with Powers charged with conditional energies which set in force mortal forms.

Q.—What do you mean by "Powers?"

A.—Powers is a word which we are obliged to use for something not on your plane—matter at rest—Man's explanation must necessarily be limited by his knowledge, by his sense perceptions. We can't explain to you questions beyond your power to understand.

Q.—When shall we if ever, be able to understand these things as they are in reality ?

A.—When you become pure spirit devoid of man's matter.

Q.—What is meant by pure spirit ?

A.—One phase of the Universal Will.

Q.—Can you explain to us the difference between soul and spirit as you use the terms ?

A.—Soul is created, and spirit is universal.

Q.—Are all souls of the same kind—emanating from the same source ?

A.—All souls are not on the same level.

Q.—Do the souls of animals survive and change as you say we mortals do ?

A.—Some animals exist on some spirit planes.

Q.—Could you name some of these ?

A.—Those most attached to man, such as the dog, the horse, and birds which are capable of attachment to personalities.

Q.—Is it right to kill animals and use their flesh for food ?

A.—Around man are many conditions of which he is not cognizant.—Matter must forever change form and it matters little in what direction it dissipates.

This answer struck me as very curious—and I thought the same reply could well be made in favor

of cannibalism. I give it as received and do not endorse its soundness or its source.

CAROLINE FOX.

I was familiar with, and some two or three years previously had read with great interest, the chatty "Memoirs of Caroline Fox" the intimate friend of John Stuart Mill and his sisters, and of many of the literary and scientific set of that generation, but when one evening "Yonder comes Caroline" was written I ran over in my mind the list of all the Caroline's I was or had been acquainted with, without once thinking of her, until the name "Caroline Fox" was written out in full in response to my query. Even then I was for the moment confused as to where I had heard the name, but soon recalled her book and the pleasure it had given me when reading it, and said something to that effect.

A.—Doubtless she will be glad to meet a friend who is in sympathy with her friendships.

S. A. U.—Will Caroline Fox say a word in regard to her friend whom I greatly admire, John Stuart Mill?

A.—John Mill sought to advance the social state of women because he was *un chevalier sans puer et sans reproche.*

Q.—Do you meet the Carlyles—Thomas and Jeannie—on your present plane.

A.—Sometimes, but their sphere seems not exactly what I expected it to be.

Q.—Are you as happy in your present state as when on our plane?

A.—Told as a wonderful dream of poet or seer I should have thought this phase of existence a phantasm too beautiful for realization, but living

this new sweet helpful life, I am constantly wondering if I am a real part of this sphere.

Q.—What constitutes your highest pleasure there?

A.—The society of loving and freed spirits.

Q.—You formed many beautiful friendships here—Do you find new friends there?

A.—Doubtless my friends on earth were sources of much real pleasure and help, but the friends on this plane are fountains of everlasting joy.

Q.—In what way do you make the acquaintance of these new friends ?

A.—All who are in sympathy here come to know each other as members of the same spirit Clan.

B. F. U.—What should you, who knew John Stuart Mill so intimately, particularize as the weakest point in his strong character ?

A.—The apparent weak point in that most lovely character, that wonderful and sincere soul, was his lack of human sympathy with the individual. The race he could partly understand, but the individual was to him a mystery.

Q.—Who is now your most intimate friend ?

A.—Brother Barclay.

Q.—Who are nearest and dearest among your women friends ?

A.—Some whom I did not emphasize in my diary and memoirs, but who really were as they now are my nearest and dearest friends.

Q.—What was your real opinion in regard to Mrs. Carlyle's character ?

A.—Jeannie Welch Carlyle—But I am not at liberty to say to you all I might if we had met in the flesh !

And here communication stopped at once and nothing further received that sitting.

MALTHUS.

The following communication came to me wholly unexpected and it deals with a subject in which I have never been particularly interested, and indeed have rather avoided since there are so many conflicting opinions thereon by those who have made the population question a study. It was therefore the more surprising to me to receive such a communication through my hand.

One evening when Mr. U. across the table from me was deeply engrossed by something he was reading, I took the pen and asked who, if any, would communicate with us. Without hesitation the pen began to move :

A.—Soul of one who while on earth was in most true accord with B. F. U.'s status, will now most gladly *nolle prosse* whatever may be thought against him by you.

Remember that so far I had not the faintest idea as to what name would be given. There had been no reading or conversation leading in the direction of this writer's thought during the day, and from aversion to the subject I rather disliked the author and had never read his works. This preface indicated a knowledge of my distaste.

Q.—Whose soul is that ?
A.—Malthus ! [written in a bold hand.]

I here called Mr. U.'s attention, reading the question and answer aloud to him, but he being still only half attentive, thought I said "Lamarck" instead of "Malthus" and asked in consequence :

Q.—What was the most essential point in your theory ?

A.—The survival of the fittest, which was the essential core of my attempt to say what was possible as to stirpiculture.

B. F. U.—That is not true. Lamarck's theory was that the appetencies, wants and desires determine organic structure, causing even the distinction between species.

S. A. U.—Did Malthus teach that ? I never understood so ?

B. F. U.—Malthus ? I thought the name given was Lamarck ?

A.—Shall now consider your question—a wrong conception !

B. F. U.—If this is Malthus who writes, I will ask if there is not considerable misapprehension of the doctrine called Malthusianism ?

A.—The extreme views of honest souls take my masterly standpoint of storage of generative power for emasculation. There is a point beyond mere increase of individual being which affects all mankind.

B. F. U.—What was the lesson which you were most desirous to inculcate ?

A.—Sound sense as regard population.

B F. U.—Do you still hold your published views on the question of population to be correct ? Or do you now see a different solution to your question ?

A.—Yes. Now I understand that mortal births are not at command of those whose acts call energies—momentarily however—into action and beget mortal life when ordained by superior power.

B. F. U.—Can mankind control population ?

A.—Somewhat, but not wholly.

B. F. U.—Is the creative energy of mortals a power which on the whole works for good ?

A.—Most surely, for generative force derives its

stimulus from the same source which 'glows in the stars and blossoms in the trees,' and furnishes the electric light called genius.

B. F. U.—Are you now, with superior intelligence to that which you possessed when here, in accord with Darwin's theory as to the origin of species ?

A.—Some of Charles Darwin's theories are as foundationless as those of thousands of other idealists.

B. F. U.—What was Darwin's greatest limitation ?

A.—His dependence upon his sense perception.

B. F. U.—What was the marked limitation of his position on the origin of species ?

A.—Ah, yes. We now catch your meaning ! Darwin himself recognizes now, that his views were based mainly on the lower side of man's being ; that he had no conception of his larger dual nature, but he also understands that his limitations were absolutely necessary to correct views on the subjects he was studying and which he now understands were so necessary to man's enlightenment.

DARWIN.

The foregoing statement substantially agrees with a communication given on another occasion purporting to be from Darwin, which began in this way :

Yonder comes one who will do you honor by his desire to speak with you.

Q.—Will he give his name ?

A.—Charles Darwin.

Q.—If this is Mr. Darwin we will be glad to have an expression of his ideas in regard to his new state of existence ?

A.—When on earth I worked conscientiously in certain grooves. I was often puzzled, but being of

a logical turn of mind was obliged to accept such conclusions as my experiments led to. I did not then understand the limitations of sense perceptions and sometimes I was greatly mistaken. I was not then aware of the reasonableness of another stage of being. I have, since changing my form, recognized my onesidedness, but now perceive that in my then conditional state I was not to blame for the false conclusions I made from mortal premises. We here feel rejoiced that we can return through congenial mediumship.—Charles Darwin.

ST. CATHERINE.

Very many unique and unexpected communications have been received of which I can here give but one or two short samples. Once, after several incoherent words had been essayed, "Woman wants to say a word," was written in a clear, bold hand. "I am always glad to hear from any woman," I answered, and asked:

Q.—Who is it will now write?
A.—Catherine.

I named all the Catherines which occurred to my mind, but no response was made. Finally "Saint" was written.

Q.—Is it St. Catherine? If so, will you not give some expression of your ideas in regard to our sex?
A.—Woman's highest work means self-abnegation.

I protested against this as savoring too much of former masculine ideas, and asked:

Q.—Why should women more than men be self-sacrificing?

A.—Please remember that I, as a virgin worker, did not study man's requirements.

Q.—But what do you consider the very highest thing for all humanity?

A.—Love.

This written in large letters.

Q.—What is your definition of love?

A.—Love is joy in universal uplifting and soul-progress.

ST. THOMAS AQUINAS.

One signing the name "Thomas Aquinas," when asked what characteristic thought could be written, gave this:

A.—Bourgeoned with happy thoughts, we have not words wherewith to utter them in your bounded language.

I said I did not believe that the writer was Thomas Aquinas, as there was no reason whatever why that early saint should be drawn to me.

A.—Saintly souls are ever at one with the pure aspirations of the most modest spiritual thinker. Kindred souls shall ever be in true sympathy; and on your plane—oh, so limited!—much has to be taken on trust, for, with all your earthly wisdom, you are forced to concede that faith is an absolute necessity. By and by you will understand why.

The singular thing in this communication is the use of the word "bourgeoned,"—a word which to my conscious knowledge I had never seen before, and which, when written, I doubted there being such a word. However, on consulting the dictionary, I found that "bourgeon" meant to "shoot into branches," to blossom. I could then see the appropriateness of its use.

LINCOLN.

The name of Abraham Lincoln having been written, the question was asked:

Q.—Do you meet in your new sphere those who were the cause of your death, and if so, with your increased knowledge, do you feel anger or aversion toward them?

A.—Zones of spiritual life are so overlapped and intermixed that those of us who went out from your sphere through blind and bloody ways are so much aware of the sense barriers which shut off the perception of the boundaries between spirit and flesh, that no vengeful feeling can remain even in individual cases.

Q.—Then you bear such persons no ill-will?

A.—Brothers are we all, even Booths.

Q.—If this is Lincoln who replies, tell us in what light you now view Booth's act.

A.—John Wilkes Booth was the ordained man whose maddened brain was used to emphasize the divine way to martyrdom for the sake of the work of life's progress.

Q.—We are then to understand that you are now from your higher point of view content with the manner of your death.

A.—You ask am I content that my life went out as it did. You want to get evidence as to the higher wisdom evolved in my painful going out?

Q.—Yes, we wish you to state your thought in regard to it.

A.—Warfare of all kinds marks life's progress. Soldiers of life are as surely bound to eternal law as earthly soldiers are bound by military discipline.

Q.—Have you yet personally met John Wilkes Booth?

A.—Soul paths diverge, as sense paths do.

ROBERT CHAMBERS.

One evening among many interrupted communications the name "Robert Chambers" was abruptly written,

Q.—Are you the Robert Chambers supposed to be the author of 'Vestiges of Creation?'

A.—When I wrote that work the world was not in accord with truth, and I had to consider with Scotch caution the effect of my investigations on the pecuniary prospects of Chambers Brothers.

Q.—Do you still think the work a reliable one?

A.—Crammed with errors. I was sincere when I wrote it, but since my change of condition I wish I had not written before—gone.

AN ARMY FRIEND.

In the following communication, which is given mainly as a specimen of some of the earlier unsatisfactory sort, the strange thing is that while it was being written there occurred to both Mr. U. and myself many points which could have been written more pertinent in regard to the friend of Mr. U. who purported to write, than what was given. The name was that of a comrade of Mr. U.'s early manhood who enlisted with him in the same company at the outbreak of the war and was taken prisoner with him at the battle of Ball's Bluff. The friendship was renewed in after years. Why the knowledge possessed by Mr. U. and myself of certain particulars of more interest than what is here given was not made use of, if our minds could influence this writing, is a question for those who contend that this writing emanates from the conscious or unconscious knowledge of

the person who holds the pen, or by telepathy transmitted from the brain of persons present. That the one whose name was signed died finally from the effects of a bullet in the brain from an old wound received in the war, might, however, explain to those who accept the spiritualistic hypothesis, the reason of loss of memory in regard to points which we expected would be touched upon. The communication began unexpectedly thus:

Dear Frank! How glad I am to meet you this way. M. D. name signed in full.

B. F. U.—If this is M. will he recall some incident known to us both by which I may recognize him?

A.—Shall I tell of our imprisonment, or shall I state what occurred later?

B. F. U.—Whichever you please.

A.—Return to our battle experiences. Wasn't I surprised to know you were a prisoner like myself in Richmond? It made life a little brighter to know you shared my trouble.

B. F. U.—What incidents of our prison life can you recall?

A.—Round us were many men whose thoughts were in direct opposition to yours and mine, yet they gave us renewed hope for humanity because of their lofty aims through poor ideals.

B. F. U.—That is true, but rather vague. Can you not recall something more definite?

A.—Frank, don't you remember what I said to you one day about the possibilities of existence after death?

B. F. U.—It may be that you did, but I don't remember that clearly. Can't you remember some other matter?

I had never heard Mr. U. refer to any such con-

versation between himself and this friend whom I never personally met.

A.—Yes, but I want to say that I was then much in the dark. Today I know so much more that I long to satisfy my old friend that existence is a more wonderful thing than either of us thought, but I know you are in a measure prepared for the sweet change, but I wasn't. But I am the more content.

B. F. U.—Now if this were really M. D. he would, I feel sure, give me more definite answers. Tell me some striking incident of our prison life.

A.—Sharing our clothes.

B. F. U.—That is true. I do remember your kindness to me when you had some under clothing sent you by friends which you generously shared with me when my own was worn out and soiled.

This was not the prison incident Mr. U. had in mind at the moment. and if he had ever related it to me, it had passed out of my mind.

B. F. U.—Is there any word you would like us to send your wife?

A.—You might give her word of hope to meet me here, but you know we men are sometimes in doubt as to what wives should be told what we wish when freed from earthly cares. Write her as you would like your wife to be written to if you were in my place, and state our happier condition here so far as mortals guess.

As we knew this husband and wife to be very devoted to each other, we thought this message very indefinite, and to test it, asked:

Do you really wish us to send such vague words as those to her?

A.—Oh, she would be so happy! She would have faith in you, and I should be satisfied.

But we were so doubtful of this that I must confess we failed to give such a vague message.

B. F. U.—Do you remember, or have you met T. and J. and A. of our regiment who passed over before you?

A.—All those people are erased from present memory. I am sorry, but that is so.

B. F. U.—Can you not still recall what happened when you were with us?

A.—Slowly memory works within us. Goodnight dear old comrade in war and in so-called peace.

And we have never been able to get another communication from this person. The only significant thing in this was the recalling of the incident of sharing his clothes with Mr. U. while in Richmond when they were prisoners of war.

ANOTHER FRIEND.

Another time when the amanuensis purported to write, quite unexpectedly was given the name of an intimate friend who took great pleasure in discussing philosophic questions with Mr. U., during his lifetime. He was up to the time of his departure, ten years before, an enthusiastic student of Spencer, Huxley and Darwin, etc.

Yonder comes R. R. with an air of joyous anticipation, and of anxiety that we correctly report him.

Q.—Will you describe him?

A.—Eyes dark brown—clear complexion—curly hair, brown and fine—slender, so that he seems tall but was not. R. says that when you are translated you will willingly concede that life with all

its apparent hardships was well worth living to attain this stage of being.

This description, rapidly written, was more correct than either of us present could have given of one we both knew well. The "air of joyous anticipation" was one he often wore, especially on meeting Mr. U. after some separation, as they had always so much in common to talk about on their favorite subjects.

We asked several questions each suggested by the other, without waiting for answer.

A.—Won't my friend Underwood ask one question at a time?

Q.—Well if this is R. R. will you tell me whether in your new sphere you are still interested in those subjects which so much engaged your mind when here?

A.—By all means. Some things—those pertaining to moral and intellectual well being.

Q.—Do individuals there remember the names of the friends that they cared for here?

A.—Certainly, not so much the names of those they loved, as the sweet helpfulness of that friendship which helped them to a higher outlook.

Q.—What does time mean to you now?

A.—Time we know of only relatively.

Q.—Are your answers limited by our ignorance?

A.—Yes—we are obliged to answer according to your limitations. If we should state the simple truth of our lives here you could not understand.

Q.—Do you have your hours of sleep there?

A.—Sleep, as you understand it, is unknown to us.

Q.—How does matter appear to you?

A.—Simply one phase of being. I wish I had at command words to explain. When at school, if the teacher when you were studying the first

principles of arithmetic, had asked you to explain an algebraic problem, could you have done it? Wait—be patient.

Q.—Are you happier there than when in our form?

A.—O, dear friend you ought to know with your experience that this life is immeasurably happier.

W. R. CROOKS.

Among the unknown names was one which for a month or so frequently appeared. It was "W. R. Crooks"—always just the initials, and often as messages were begun none were ever completed. Such attempts, taking up my time and with no definite results, were rather annoying to me. Once when I asked who this Crooks was, the following answer was made:

A.—W. R. Crooks—soldier—Crooks is striving to get worked spiritually out without dependence on media on our side. Because he organized soldierly troops while on your side, he fancies he can work wonders with doubtful powers on this side the Veil.

Q.—Will he succeed?

A.—We doubt—he does not.

At any rate he did not succeed through my hand, for soon the attempts were given up, to my satisfaction. Such attempts, however, proved to my mind that my own consciousness has nothing to do with these communications, for of myself I could have arranged them much more satisfactorily. As to the personality of this writer I know there were one or two generals in the U, S. Army named Crooks, but I don't think the initials were the same.

SAUL OF TARSUS.

One evening the first thing written was:

Whom call ye?

Q.—We are not particular. Who asks the question?

A.—Saul of Tarsus.

Q.—Well Saul of Tarsus—or Paul—what have you to say to us?

A.—Pagans are ye!

Q.—Perhaps we are from your point of view, but what message have you for us?

A.—Search Christian records and you will find truth with man.

This was written in the earlier months of my automatic writing, when certainly the preceding statement was not in harmony with my own views

Many are the mysteries and oddities of automatic writing!

CHAPTER XIII.

UNIQUE COMMUNICATIONS.

In the earlier communications which came to me in the way of automatic writing before Pharos had been heard from, there was a wide diversity of handwritings—changing many times during one short sitting, and the subjects treated of were generally of so personal a nature that I could not without impertinence undertake to verify them; nor could they be given to the public. Many of these messages were also unique and varied in character, and of such I here give some specimens.

E. R. EAMES.

From the beginning there was one communicant of a somewhat flippant nature who persisted in writing the name "E. R. Eames" over and over again and interpolating all sorts of comical, satirical, or saucy remarks, either to us personally or in regard to other writers. Neither Mr. U. nor I had ever known or heard of any individual by that name. I had known a number of people who spelt their name "Ames," but none who spelt it "Eames," and I grew tired of its constant repetition, and said so. But still "E. R. Eames" continued to appear time after time. Then I remarked:

E. R. Eames you know we don't know who you are. Will you tell us something about yourself,

where was your home, and explain why you write that name so often and so meaninglessly ?

A.—Born in New York and died in Albany—was waiting near where communications were given and felt sure you two were friends to lonesome fellows.

One evening when many sentences from different writers had been begun and left unfinished and we wondered why, his familiar writing appeared thus:

You are not in the right condition for entertaining such company.—E. R. Eames.

Then I said:

Q.—You are here again Mr. Eames! When we have told you we don't want your company, as you are unknown to us and seem not to have anything very definite to say.

A.—Yes, you told me so, but here I am, all samee !

Q.—How many are present with you?

A.—Confounded lot of cranks here to-night—we have cranks here as you do in the body.—E. R. Eames.

Then a different hand wrote:

Eames is one of those cranks which one of your friends tries to keep back, but he gets there all the same.

Q.—Who is the friend of whom you speak?—Then came Eames' writing:

A.—Greek fellow—he's a pretty good sort, only we don't understand his writing ; he's a sort of go-between all of us.

I have wondered since if this might not have referred to Pharos, as yet unknown by name.

Q.—Mr. Eames, why do you come when we don't ask you to?

A.—E. R. Eames don't wait for urging—round you gather all the weary and wounded souls needing help—every song and sermon you two can give to the poor—(interruption).

Another time he announced himself thus:

E. R. Eames—All my wishes are made fun of by you. Born of good—

Here an interruption was made by another writer who wrote :

E. R. Eames is a crank.

This was supplemented by Eames thus :

Great Scott—yes !

Q.—Mr. Eames we hardly know how to take you.

A.—Wouldn't fool you—but must have my joke even here!

Q.—But cant you be serious once in a while?

A.—Never was serious in my bodily life—and cant be now.

Q.—But is not life where you are a serious matter.

A.—Oh, shut up!—you scare a fellow !

Mr. U. here interposed a question to which I objected as I wished to get rid of E. R. Eames—then was written:

A.—Bone of your bone should have a chance.

This referred to Mr. U.'s request. A new handwriting appeared but seemed not able to write definitely—then another wrote: "E. R. Eames is trying hard to come."

B. F. U.—Let him come then and tell us something of himself. How did you pass out of the body, Mr. Eames ?

A.—Cremated—burned when alive—body in water, and a man guessed that when drowned could not sign my name—*but I can.*

Q.—What sphere do you now occupy ?

A.—When and where we go
Earth-born may not know.

The account given I took to mean that he had probably been blown up in some steamer and burned and his body was found in the water.

Q.—Where were you when burned and drowned?

A.—Albany, N. Y.

Q.—What year was that ?

A.—1883—returned in 1884. Always lived in Albany; singer, Rouse was the one who said I could'nt sign my name—bondsman.

On another occasion was written :

E. R. Eames says he can sign his name if he is drowned—with a bold dash, too !

Q.—But why do you come to us ?

A,—I'm kind of lonesome and you are a good sort.

When Mr. U. had criticized a statement from some one writing in regard to the conditions of the life beyond, came thus :

E. R. Eames.—B. F. U. don't understand, in spite of his logic, our surroundings; in twenty years he'll know more than he does now—Round you are conditions which you don't understand.

One evening he announced :

Well I've joined a Society of Spirits who are

anxious to get into definite relations with those on your plane.

Q.—Can we be of any assistance to your Society?

A.—You can help when we are decided as to proper methods.

After joining this Society, E. R. Eames did not come near us for some months; then all of a sudden appeared the familiar E. R. Eames. I said:

Q.—So here you are again!—Did you ever know me in life?

A.—Portland, Oregon, was where I first made your acquaintance.

This refers to the fact that my first experiments in automatic writing were begun while on a visit in 1889 to the Pacific Coast and the first fragmentary writing came to me in Portland, Oregon; so I replied:

A.—Yes. I remember yours was among the first names written when I tried to get this writing. What attracted you to me since I never knew you in earth life?

A.—Bold—and I always had a cranky atmosphere and felt at home with such as you and B. F. Underwood.

My readers will perceive that friend Eames was entirely frank if not flattering in his statements. One of the last occasions on which this name appeared was as follows, coming expectedly after some months' silence:

E. R. Eames is glad to get a chance to renew his friendly relations with the Underwoods.

Q.—Your friendly feeling is reciprocated—how have you been getting along since we last heard from you?

A.—Right smart.

S. A. U.—I hope you've got over your fancy for writing your name so often?

A.—Name was all there was to me.

S. A. U.—However, I have rather a kindly feeling toward you, since you were about the first who communicated with me in this way.

A.—Yes, I was, and because my push is such I can get in rapport where more prudent spirits dare not venture.

I call attention to the apparent naturalness of this one individualized communicant with whom we had very little in common, who came into this method of communication in much the same way as such individuals come into our lives here; the tone of thought and choice of language were always commonplace, with a dash of frothy fun in them, such as, when some other hand announced that so-and-so would reply to some philosophical question, there would be rapidly written, "Crank!—E. R. Eames," intimating Eames' estimate of the one announced.

Now is it more likely that my subconscious self fictionized this sort of amiable bore as a communicator at irregular and unexpected intervals to deceive me, than that he was just what he claimed to be, a commonplace, discarnate spirit, keeping still his unadvanced earthly characteristics.

A quasi-confirmation of the probability of such an individual having existed was lately given us in a letter from a member of the Eames family (written after having read an article in *Religio Philosophical Journal* in which I had given a short statement in regard to the E. R. Eames writing) who stated that although she did not know that

particular member of the family, yet the character of his communications were in keeping with the family characteristics especially the love of fun and tone of reply.

A SLAVE-GIRL'S STORY

Admitting for a moment the subconscious ego theory, how can that possibly account for my hand writing the following eerie communication which followed one of a wholly different tenor, and came at a time when nothing had been read or thought of by either of us which would tend to reawaken the old anti-slavery emotions of thirty years ago. After a little pause, when the other communication had been quite finished, we asked:

Q.—Who will now communicate with us?

A.—Southern woman,—Sally.

Q.—Sally what?

A.—Sally,—bondwoman and slave—wants to say that all are equal here.

Q.—In what Southern State did you live, when in our form?

A.—Louisiana.

Q.—What draws you here now?

A.—Your love for the down-trodden.

Q.—Have you any special message to give?

A.—Yes: women of our color are to be brought up to the natural level of all women, Those are born who will see this possible.

Q.—If you were a slave, how comes it that you were interested in the woman question, as that is an advanced idea?

A.—Was allowed special privileges, as all pleasing girls were, when sensual men were masters.

Q.—When did you die?

A.—Torn to pieces by bloodhounds seven years before Louisiana seceded.

The words "Torn to pieces" were written as if representative of the act, in large, ragged-looking letters. I shuddered as I read what was written, and expressed my horror, as well as my doubt, of the truthfulness of the story. Immediately came this:

A.—Southerners would not allow that such horrors were; but slavery knew bloody stories.

Q.—What is your reason for coming now to me with this dreadful relation?

A.—Ghosts are spiritual. You should know all sides of spirit life.

Since this was written nearly five years ago, it has been frequently recalled to my mind whenever I have read in the daily papers of the constantly increasing efforts of colored women everywhere in clubs, societies, and in individual instances to "raise themselves up to the natural level of all women" and I have rejoiced in my own heart that I am permitted to be among "those born who will see this possible," which I do most heartily believe. The time indeed is nearly here now when the independent individuality of the women of the colored race will be recognized and respected.

A BOSTON EDITOR.

One evening the first words written were:

We are waiting.

Q.—Who is waiting?

A.—A Boston editor.

Then the name of one whom we had met but were not intimate with, followed.

Q.—Have you met our mutual friend Miss H.?

A.—Marah ?—Yes, I have been within conscious percept of her spirit-power and wished to get into direct communication, but could not.

Q.—She was so intimate a friend in your family I should think you two would have met before this ?

A.—Souls of us who were sense friends do not here always assimilate.

Q.—Did you while in the body have any expectation of continued existence ?

A.—I did'nt have definite ideas in regard to a world beyond.

Q.—But you believed that in some way you would live on ?

A.—Spirit life I expected, but not such as I found was here.

Q.—Do you still take an interest in the friends you left behind.

A.—Yes, in children and wife.

I doubted whether he had any children, but Mr. U. thought he had.

Q.—Do you remember Miss L. ?

This lady was a distant relative of the one purporting to be in communication, and a contributor to his paper.

A.—J. G. was her pen name—name was given by me; Marah and she were good friends—both a little erratic.

I knew the lady's literary pseudonym, but do not know whether it was selected by the editor; knew also that the two named, though years apart in age, were dear friends, and both were "set" in their own peculiar ways.

Q.—Miss H. and you were friends for so long

that I should hardly expect you to make such a remark as that.

A.—Yes, we were good friends, but not much real sympathy.

Q.—Since entering upon your new life, have you found methods of communicating with your family?

A.—Spiritualism of the worst sort has so befouled the truth that it has been impossible to get into rapport with those we love.

This was followed by a request that we should give his family a word from him, but as we were not acquainted with them, and would be placed in an awkward position if we did so, of course that was impossible to assent to. I give this specimen only to show that, mixed up with what we did know were often statements which were unknown to us, and so could hardly emanate from our minds, whatever other source they may have sprung from.

At this same sitting the following purported to come from another representative of the Hub:

Boston was the birthplace of individual liberty. It shall yet be the birthplace of spiritual enlightenment.

Once was written the name of a gentleman of unique character, a former Army Chaplain, very sensitive and "touchy," with whom for a short time Mr. U. had been brought into business contact. It began:

Chaplain F. is ready to write but hopes you will consider how easily hurt are his sensibilities. When with you he suffered much from contact with coarse-minded free-thinkers, and is yet sore from that experience.

S. A. U.—What proof can you give B. F. U. of your identity with the person you claim to be.

A.—Change of "Globe" article—Rent annoyed me—Bargain with me about calling for papers—papers that I had paid for.

Though my hand wrote it, all this was new to me. Mr. U. recalled that some change had been made by editorial cutting of an article which Mr. U. had helped Mr. F. to write for some Boston daily paper, but was not sure it was the Globe. And though he knew he rented rooms in the same building where Mr. U. had an office, could not recall anything in regard to rent known to Mr. U. nor did he understand the allusion to "papers." When Mr. U. so stated my hand wrote:

A.—Shows how poor your memory is.

Mr. U. perceiving that there was evidence of annoyance here, spoke soothingly of the supposed communicant's charitable work which he said he could better remember than the items referred to, and recalled one of his proteges whom he had often helped. But that did not seem to mollify, as the next words written showed:

A.—B. was a bother and I grew tired of him. Chaplain F. disdains to recall those things at this time. I feel wounded by your tone—so good-night.

And so this fragmentary but characteristically petulant communication closed.

FROM AN UN-NAMED COMMUNICANT.

One evening the first thing written was: "Will you designate the person you most wish to hear

from?" Mr. U. named a near relative, but one not of an intellectual cast of thought, or at all interested while here in any but every day subjects. Reply was at once made as if from the person named, but as follows:

A.—Control should be given to the one who will make the most sensible use of it. Do be of good sense, and find out all you can independent of your clannish desire. There is so much to be revealed, and you ought to know that I did not and do not now understand the things that you do. There are here present many who are able to teach both you and me. Do give them the opportunity.

Whether this really came from the party called for, or emanated from those present "able to teach" and desirous to do so, I am not sure, but Mr. U. signified his acquiesence with the suggestion, and as we had been earlier wondering about the question asked:

Q.—Why do so many apparently educated and common-sense mediums profess to be controlled by uncultured Indian spirits? Is it really possible for such to get control of those of a different race who seem to be their superiors?

A.—Yes—There are so many so-called cultured people who are really on a savage plane that uneducated Indians are the best interpreters of their over-estimated thought.

Q.—Do all children who die from earth, increase in growth and knowledge when they come on your side?

A.—When undeveloped blossoms fade before maturing with you, when we take charge of them we do our best to develop them, but it may be that sometimes we fail in our efforts; but we are not bound to tell you of our failures.

Q.—Were those who now write us from your sphere once on earth in our form, or did they originate from other planets?

A.—We lived as you now live; we were once in material form—where, it matters not.

Q.—Do spirits on entering your plane go to those of their own family, or are they attracted to those in sympathy with them, regardless of family ties?

A.—Relations by spirit, and not mere blood.

Q.—Does the soul once started in the individual man always thereafter keep its conscious individuality, or are all souls at last merged in one universal being?

A.—We perceive more distinctly than it is possible for you to do, the relation between man and the Universe, but we are not advanced enough to answer definitely the more abstruse questions of Universal Being, which trouble us on this plane as they do you on yours. We see a little more clearly what is possible in the way of still further advancement—that is all—yet.

Q.—Can you tell us in what consisted Christ's power?

A.—Sympathy with Humanity.

Q.—Wherein lay Buddha's strength?

A.—The self-same spirit.

Q.—And Mohammed's?

A.—By reason of his desire to elevate his race.

Q.—And Confucius'?

A.—Sympathetic common-sense and philanthropic anxiety.

Q.—And Joseph Smith, the Mormon leader?

A.—Physical sensibility, mixed with intense idealism of a sensuous character.

I will close this chapter of unique communications by a sample of the frequent unfinished ones

received through my hand which are wholly mysterious to my own knowledge.

One day I felt so strongly the thrill which I have come to recognize as the call for automatic writing that, though I have never been able to get satisfactory writing without Mr. U.'s presence, I thought I would at least try. In an old-fashioned cramped handwriting was then slowly written with great effort:

Prisoner—please sit for me—do good.

I said I would be very glad to, if the one writing wished me to, and could use my hand; might I know who was communicating? The efforts to write made my arm ache badly—and all that was written was "Son of Cro (then a scrawl) I am an old prisoner of Bert—Consequence"—here the effort was given up, but it seemed rather pathetic, and I was sorry that I could not have known more about the case. I fancied the broken word Bert might have been intended for "Birth."

CHAPTER XIV.

REQUESTS FOR PUBLICATION.

I began and continued my experiments in automatic writing solely to gratify my personal desire to get at all the truth attainable through this source. For more than a year after beginning these experiments I had no intention whatever that the results should be known by any other person than Mr. U., whose presence seemed absolutely necessary to obtain the writing, and he as well as I was disposed to maintain silence in regard to the messages. Later, for reasons which I have already mentioned, and in this chapter will try to make more clear, I published the account in the *Arena* and others in the *Religio-Philosophical Journal* and, though I tried in these accounts to emphasize the fact that I was pursuing my psychical studies *only* for my self-satisfaction in regard to spiritual matters, it seems that many have been unable to understand this, and have thought me willing to be made use of for the investigations of others and to work on their plans. I have, greatly to my annoyance since publishing these articles, received very many letters, with locks of hair, trinkets of various sorts, and requests that I make experiments with these in behalf of the senders —mainly strangers to me—in my pen and ink interviews with the unseen friends whom I consider as sacredly my own personal friends as any

I hold dear in the body; and I would as soon think of taking up the time and thought of my most cherished and sensitive friends in earthly form, with the details of the wants and wishes of those who misunderstandingly make these requests, as I would of my friends on the other side of life's mystery.

And I may as well state here what I hope all who may read this volume will unmistakably understand, that it is utterly useless to send me such requests. I have neither the time at command, nor the wish or intention, to put myself at the disposal of other people, in this matter, while I am willing to give in printed form the results of my investigations made from my own and Mr. U.'s standpoints of inquiry. This leads me now to the point of stating more fully *why* I published these investigations at all.

Before we had thought of making any public statement of our experiments in automatic writing, and at times when we had no intention of so doing, we we often unexpectedly urged to tell others of these communications. I will here give a few specimens of such messages, which generally come in the midst or at the close of some interesting communication, with nothing however leading up to these pleadings. Once at the close of some personal message was written:

Will you say to your friends anything of what we have tried to say through you?

S. A. U.—Do you understand the martyrdom your request implies?

A.—Yes, we do know the cost, but will not the

knowledge of important good done pay for the sacrifice?

B. F. U.—Will you state what it is you wish us to do?

A.—Brother, would you allow your name to be used as reference. Wouldn't ask you to make too great sacrifice; will you permit your name be used as evidence of spirit honor?

Q.—What do you mean by spirit honor?

A.—Honor with us means the same as with you.

S. A. U.—But try to put yourselves in our place. Would you like to risk your reputation for sanity to fulfill our requests?

A.—Could not think of making a scape-goat of you dear madam, but we have no other way to reach people.

Another time was written:

Sara, wont you ask as to what shall be the attitude taken by you and our dear Bhama, as to our messages to you two?

Q.—What do you wish our attitude to be?

A.—That soul is greater than sense. Shut out vague theories, and deal with our messages as you do with those sent by unseen earthly friends by telegraph, telephone or writing.

S. A. U.—I surely do now accept them in a trustful spirit as real messages from real beings.

Q.—Bhama does not speak

B. F. U.—I would like to have you say to me just what you have in mind.

A.—Spiritual life, of which you are still doubtful, dear brother, is more—yes, wordlessly more true, true, than your ephemeral phase. When you end doubtful shams and are over on our plane, you will wonder and feel abashed at your doubting attitude.

When I expressed my pleasure on receiving some of their helpful statements was written:

A.—Share you gladness with a select few before publication.

On another occasion,

You certainly should make ready some digest of the information we have given you, if you are desirous to help make known the truth of perfect intercommunication between our sphere and yours. By so doing you will bring gladness to many doubting souls and aching hearts.

Again,

Readers of your experience with us will be partakers with you of the blessed knowledge of extension of sentient existence, and will thank you for giving them hope.

One evening after a number of different messages in varied handwritings had been begun but left unfinished, I asked:

Q.—Why are so many mixed and unfinished messages given—can't you do better?

A.—Could do better if B. F. Underwood would become interested.

Mr. U. was at the time busy writing an article which he was anxious to finish that evening and when I read the above to him he said so.

A.—Remember that all work for the enlightenment of your race is equally important.

B. F. U.—What is it you wish me to do?

A.—Emerge from all unproven theories men are giving when there comes that which can be confirmed.

This was apparently aimed at the subject of the article he was writing, which dealt with some phases of the question of subliminal consciousness. He then put aside his writing and asked:

Q.—Do you expect to be able to convince people generally of spirit existence through these communications?

A.—Good will come of the present interest in the inter-communication between your plane and ours, and we are here waiting as anxiously as are those of you who have been able to obtain evidence from us of man's continued existence, to learn how the bonds of communication may be systemized and brought out.

Q.—How may we be of use in this matter?

A.—Write out the experiences which we have been able to give you, and trust to the possible common sense of men of all conditions to realize the truths you and we are anxious to give.

Q.—But so far we have gained only fragmentary knowledge of your plane and the laws which govern it—would it then be best to say anything publicly, yet?

A.—Give as far as given and afterward give addenda.

As I have before stated the word "Coward" in big letters was often interpolated among messages before I had made up my mind to write out my experiences, and when I asked what it was intended to convey, as I did not think I was a coward, my hand rapidly wrote:

A.—Well, we are very anxious to have the truth of soul communion established. We have done our best to awaken interest among those on your plane and meet with so little sensible appreciation that we grow impatient.

The same feeling was expressed thus:

Tongue cannot express our vexation when we are doing all we can to give you evidence beyond cavil, to find how hard you are to accept. Your

vanity is what is in the way. Mortals are as queer as ever!

At another time appeared this addressed to B. F. U.:

Want you to do what you can to arouse curiosity and thought as to spirit return. Your soundly sensible position from earthly standpoints will make men more ready to accept what you may affirm. We need such thinkers who will be ready for criticism and investigation and who will keep their judicial status.

Mr. U. was often urged to help forward the work in such appeals as these:

As Samuel asked the Voice what was wished of him, so spirit of Bhama should ask of his spirit friends what mission power should be his in this crisis.

The reply was that his mission was to help publish the truth in regard to these communications, and let his name give weight to them.

Q.—When you urge us to state publicly what you have told us as to continued existence, don't you know that many will disbelieve what we may say?

A.—Some will doubt what you may state, but the many are an hungered and athirst for the truth as it has been given through you two.

One thing seemed strange to me—the insistent demand of the writers of these communications upon Mr. U.'s recognition of spiritual power. I should not of myself have thought of demanding such recognition from him, and once I said half earnestly after some such request:

Q.—I think you who communicate through my hand show partiality to B. F. U. and don't take as much interest in me as you do in him?

A.—Certainly we do. Perhaps we are more anxious as to him, for we are sure of you. You have had so strong evidence that you cannot doubt. If through him we could write, then he would be as sure as you are. But we are glad that through you we have now so strong a hold on our dear brother that when we meet him he will feel at home and understand all the strange conditions.

Once after Mr. U. had stated what was perhaps the rationale of spirit return, came this:

A.—With joy we hear our brother's views. To only a few on your plane is it given to understand what he and a farther away few philosophical minds have caught glimpses of.

As Mr. U. did not at once commit himself to the project of making public our experiences, to which I was also much averse—every once in awhile, when receiving communications on some subject, such entirely irrelevant questions as this would be added:

Those here are now anxious to know what you have decided upon as to Spiritual wonders.

When I asked if they would express some wish of their own, this was given:

Read, and think of all we reveal. Help to make your brethren and sisters understand that death does not end all.

Again:

I asked incidentally if there was anything my correspondents wished to impress upon me from their point of view. Instantly was written:

Share with all your spirit guerdon,
Speak of what we strive to burden
Souls on your plane to prevision
To the ones whose souls have striven
In vain to come to clear decision
As to what spirit teaching proffers—
The army vast of doubters, scoffers.

When at length we decided that justice to the truth demanded that we make public statement of our experience, the tone of these communications changed from anxiety to satisfaction, shown in such statements as the following:

You may never understand the joy your advocacy gives to us here on a plane which you mortals cannot understand, and we will help you all that lies within our power to bring about the true intercourse between your plane and ours. Shall you dare to withstand misconceptions and mean thrusts of undeveloped men and women, so that you may eventually bring about a reconciliation of spirit and sense?

At other times they offered a word of warning, as when, after writing "Those here are anxious to know what you have decided upon in regard to making public report of Spiritual wonders"? and we replied that we had concluded to accede to their wishes, then came:

A.—We are glad to have so staunch supporters of radical truth speak out so openly—But have you counted the cost? Radical as you are, you have not yet touched the dregs of prejudiced opinions of alien thinkers on Spiritual subjects.

So urgent was their desire for a hearing that after Mr. U. had begun his first article for the *Arena* on Automatic Writing, when one evening we were receiving a communicatien on a subject

in no way connected with it, after a question had been asked from their side and Mr. U. was pausing to formulate his reply, the following was rapidly interpolated:

Pending what B. F. U. has to say, let us suggest that all you prepare from our point of view should take firm ground as to our advanced position. There should be acknowledgment that we are a step in advance, and a characteristic rendering of our views.

Yet in spite of their eagerness to gain a public hearing we had occasional evidence of their almost earthly sensitiveness to criticism or doubt as to their statements. I will give a recent evidence of this sensitiveness, and also of the fact that they kept themselves *au courant*—perhaps as they have intimated through reading of mortal minds—with the published occurrences of the day.

One afternoon I had been occupied in the earlier part of it in reading with much interest the exceedingly careful statements made by Professors Lodge and Myers, with that of Mrs. Sidgwick, in regard to their experiences at séances held on a lonely island in test of the power governing the mediumship of Eusapia Paladino; and as I read I occasionally commented favorably on their careful statements and good work. Later in the evening I sat down to see if I could get any writing, and after a few personal communications were received and intimation given that not much more would be got that evening, I asked if before they went some parting word might not be given of their own accord.

A.—Thou sayest not what word we shall voice.
Q.—I would like some word of advice as to my own course of action.

I was not expecting the reply to be given in rhyme—nor was I at the moment thinking at all of what I had been reading, but it will be seen that the intelligence which guided my hand had in mind, and with some disfavor, the experiments of the scientists or their carefully guarded statements.

Based on your material plan,
Spirit aspirations scan
With studious care the powers and parts
Of mortal souls, whose busy marts
Where good doth still take gainful guise,
May take from us in any wise
Such word as wisdom of our sphere
Loved souls on earth should send to cheer—
When doubt of all we say prevails
Among your wisest—and details
Of worthless tests of our good will
Toward your hundred men of skill
Are given with waste of words, distrust
Of plainest evidence. We must
Therefore doubt wherein would be
The good of showing, e'en to thee,
What our prescience might advise
To guide and guerdon mortal lives.

This surprised and interested me as showing a note of resentment at my apparent admiration of the guarded statements of the members of the Society for Psychical Research, when really I was expressing my satisfaction that the exhibitions of unseen intelligence had been so powerful as to at least partially convince such scientific minds. The expression "your hundred men of skill" I take to mean the comparatively few people of scientific bent in the world, but never would my own thought take that form of expression.

At another time was written:

Spiritual evidence is given continuously, but mortals are charged by sublimated powers with shallow thinking, so that all spurious manifestations are thought to emanate from our spheres.

I thought this was aimed at the reckless belief in fraudulent exhibitions of pretended phenomena, by people who ought to know better when the shams are transparent. Yet it seems to apologize for such belief as emanating from "sublimated powers."

CHAPTER XV.

EARLIER EXPERIENCES WITH PLANCHETTE.

In my address before the Psychical Science Congress I mentioned one instance occurring in my earlier experiments with planchette some twenty or more years ago showing knowledge outside my own, given in the first communication received by me in behalf of a blind man then present. At the time I was much puzzled but not at all convinced of the spiritual origin of the writing, and I wrote an article for a Boston paper giving some of the results of my experiments, and in this chapter I think it may be of interest to republish some of these, adding from memory one or two further instances of occult knowledge.

To show my own state of mind on the question of Spiritualism at that time I will quote directly from the article of which I have spoken:

I am quite well aware to what I am exposing myself in confessing to having had any dealings with this mysterious toy, or machine. On the one hand, the Spiritualists will see proof of unseen spiritual agency, and on the other, our materialistic friends will "pooh-pooh" the whole thing, and declare me to be another victim of delusion. In order to enable me to steer between Scylla and Charybdis, I here make my bow to the good friends on both sides of the question, and declare that I am not going to be drawn into discussion either

way, for I believe nothing either way. But some time, I think, some daring scientific man will arise, who, not being deterred by either the over-credulity on the one side or the over-*in*credulity on the other, will calmly investigate this matter, and comparing all the facts given by impartial witnesses, reach some definite scientific conclusion, and out of this chaos of strange things bring some orderly arrangement which will place all the *facts* of modern Spiritualism in their rightful order, as the natural sequences of some *now* unknown law of Nature. Is the world so old, and men so wise, that there is never to be anything more *discovered*, I wonder?—I think *not*; and so for the benefit of this future man of Science who is thus to make himself famous, I submit the following experience with planchette:

About a year ago our neighborhood became smitten with the planchette fever; that is, half a dozen people in the vicinity bought, and experimented with that little heart-shaped toy, and the rest talked about it. Every one that knows anything about planchette, knows that it is a capricious little creature that will only move under certain undefined and indefinite circumstances. The knowledge of this fact led me to infer before I experimented with it, that here was where the deception was—that only those who chose to move planchette did move it, and the whole was an imposition. Still I was anxious to satisfy myself on this point, and when one evening at a neighbor's house, planchette was introduced as an amusement, I placed my hand, with others, upon

it, in the prescribed way. To my surprise it moved and wrote—not very sensibly, but perhaps the answers were as sensible as the questions addressed to it by half a dozen merry people.

The young lady of the house was said to be the presiding genius of that planchette; that is, it would only move under her hands, a young lady whose simplest word on any other matters I should have unhesitatingly believed; yet with only my own hand and her's on planchette, I could not be quite sure that she did not by some dexterous movement of her hand make planchette write the replies to questions. So I begged permission that I might try alone. Not a move of perverse planchette! My own younger sister being present, in whose good faith I had perfect confidence, I asked her to place her hands on the tiny platform with mine. To our mutual surprise it began immediately to move; at first in a series of ever widening circles, then to make "pot-hooks and trammels"; finally, to write. Questions were then asked by the others present and *some* of the answers were correct, the most of them vague and unsatisfactory, intermingled with a few downright fibs. But I did not feel satisfied with this or other like experiments, so one day a friend said to me: "I received lately a present of a planchette, but none of us can do anything with it. If you like you can take it home and experiment with it."

Now "at home" there was a strong prejudice against planchette, but I thought I might venture to accept the loan of one for a few days at least, and so satisfy my unabated curiosity in regard to

its workings. I say this that it may be understood that there was no trickery about it, and no connivance or any so-called spiritual juggling. I did take planchette home, and in spite of prejudiced frowns and shrugs at the sight of the harmless little platform, experimented with it to my heart's content.

Then first was I really surprised, for I did not very well know how to evade the evidence of my own senses. I was not in the least predisposed to believe in planchette's mysterious power, yet how was I to account for the fact that without any volition of my own, and with only my hand near it, it wrote replies to, not mental, but audible questions from myself or others in the room with me? Answered them, not always sensibly, not often satisfactorily, but frequently and most usually in point-blank contradiction of my inmost conviction. Now I certainly would not wish to contradict and insult myself, yet with only planchette and I to blame that is what the words written often amounted to. I give one or two instances of the general style of planchette's "communications." When asked one evening what planchette had to say to a certain person present, my hand alone being on it, it wrote—

"Tell her that Christ died for all." "Who do you mean by 'all'?" I asked. "You," was the rather irrelevant reply.

"Doubt it very much," I said. "You have no reason to doubt," it went on.

"Planchette, your dictum don't amount to any more than that of anybody else, unsupported by

evidence. I tell you I *have* good reason to doubt your statement."

"Peter had no reason to doubt either."

"You're getting mixed up my friend. It was Thomas who doubted, not Peter if I recollect aright."

"Then you have not read your Bible right," insisted planchette.

"Peter *did* doubt," some one present here remarked; "don't you remember the incident of his walking on the water, and what Christ said to him?"

While I, the apparent writer, had forgotten it, the intelligence operating planchette had in mind the incident recorded in Matthew 14, verses 25 to 31st as follows:

And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea.

And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, it is a spirit; and they cried out for fear.

But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer, it is I; be not afraid.

And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.

And he said, Come! And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water to go to Jesus.

But when he saw the wind boisterous he was afraid: and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me!

And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

So planchette was right that time.

"Tell me," I continued, "since you know so much, by what means you manage to write by planchette ?"

"You have no right to ask," wrote the Mystery, falling back on its dignity.

"Since I wish to know, I think I have a decided right to ask," I remarked.

"Believe, and thou shalt be saved."

"Too indefinite. *What* shall I believe,—the Hindoo, Mohammedan, Jewish, or Christian belief ?"

"We have no right to cleave to old traditions."

"Spoken like the oracle you are; but where shall we get new ones ?"

"That we have here to-night. You have no right to doubt." Going back to the original subject.

"Beg your pardon, but I think I have."

"Addle-head !" Written quickly, and with a savage jerk of planchette.

The other members of our family getting a little interested, tried with various success to make planchette write under their hands; but, strange to say, it would only write connectedly for me. Now if any one else made this statement, not knowing him, I should be apt to think that such a person was trying to impose upon my credulity. It is not a pleasant thing to have one's word doubted, but I have determined to state things just as they were, whatever be imagined of me. I twice asked the reason of planchette's failure to write for others as for me, as I was very anxious that it should, in order to satisfy them that the

writing was done independent of me. The answer was—

"Because they have not electricity enough about them."

"Then electricity is necessary to planchette's developments ?"

"Yes."

The limits of this article forbid any attempt to give anything save these disconnected samples of the strange conversations thus carried on. Always planchette insisted that "spirits" governed its movements. Once I pushed it from me, saying as I did so :

"Oh, planchette, you puzzle me ! I can't understand you at all !"

As soon as my hand touched it again, it scribbled off this sentence :

"In the hour of death you will know."

So far I quote from my article of twenty years ago. I will here add one or two other instances from recollection of that period. Once when the name of a school-girl friend of mine, who died early of consumption, was written, I asked if she could recall any instance to prove her identity. I had at the moment a special incident in my own mind to which I hoped reference would be made, but instead came the words:

"Do you remember that the last time we ever met was one day on the bridge, and you stopped and asked me how I was ?"

Not until then did I recall this. She was then

very feeble but was taking a short walk, and this was but a few weeks previous to her death.

When the name of a relative with whom, by reason of the distance at which she lived from us, I had not been at all intimate, was written by planchette, I expected only some friendly message, but instead over and over again came the words "Clear my name!" "Clear my name!" Then I did recall dimly the memory of some scandal having been associated with her name, the particulars of which I never fully understood, and therefore could not comply with this pathetic demand. But it struck me as strange that this was the only message I received from her.

I discovered ere long that among the diverse group of friends and acquaintances of the New England village in which I then lived, and who as "neighbors" knew of the planchette experiments and wished to take part therein, only one, a lady who lived across the street from us, could work most harmoniously with me and planchette; so for some few weeks she and I pursued our investigations together by ourselves mainly at her home. She had many friends in the spirit world, among them her mother, and a married sister who had been in life an intimate friend of mine, as well as a number of brothers and sisters much younger than herself, she being the eldest of her father's family. Thus the most of the messages were for her, and I have forgotten their import, but I know they affected her deeply, so that before long there came communications purporting to be from her mother and sister, urging her to discontinue the

use of planchette as it taxed her physical and nervous system too much.

But one instance I distinctly remember as it puzzled me greatly at the time. The lady had one son, then about ten or twelve years of age. A year or two previously her youngest sister about the same age as her son had died. The boy and his girl aunt had been firm friends and playmates, he often visiting at his grandfather's, who lived in Springfield, Mass., some sixteen miles away. One evening when we were experimenting with planchette the lad sat at some distance from us deeply immersed in reading. Presently the name of the little sister was written, "Ida sends love to Frankie," meaning the boy who was reading. His mother said: "If this is really our own little Ida will she not mention something that happened when she was with us which only she and Frank knew of, so that we can be sure it is her?" There was a little pause as though for recollection. Then planchette wrote: "Frank, don't you remember one day when you visited us in Springfield you and I were swinging on the gate, and a man came along and gave us a stick"—here the power seemed gone and nothing further was written.

As this had not been in any way in either of our minds and meant nothing to us, the mother asked Frank if he recollected any such occurrence. At first, with his mind still on his book, he did not recall anything of the klnd. A moment later a look of recollection dawned over his face. "Why, yes," he said, "the last time I visited grandpa's when Ida was alive, she and I were playing in the

front yard; she was swinging on the gate, when a man came along the street and he stopped and spoke to us and gave each of us a *big stick of candy*, and we thought it so funny as we did'nt know who the man was."

It then seemed to me that planchette had been stopped purposely at the misleading word "stick" so that the boy himself should recall the incident and furnish the clue by revealing that it was "a stick of candy" which was meant. And to-day I do not see how telepathy could explain that, since only Frank knew of the incident and while it was being written he was unheeding what was going on because of his absorption in his book, and could not at once remember the circumstance, one which would be likely, too, to be impressed on the girl's childish mind.

A strange incident in the planchette experience has haunted my mind ever since, because I have never found the key to it. While I was still interested in the workings of this little instrument, I went on a visit for a day or two to a relative who had recently moved to Westfield, Mass., a place where I was an entire stranger. I found the wife of my relative much exercised in mind over her husband's choice of residence for them, as the house he had hastily taken before removal from another town, was not to her liking; for though roomy and in fairly pleasant surroundings, it was quite an old house with no modern conveniences.

To divert her mind from this grievance, the first evening I spent there I began to tell her about the doings of planchette at home, and she became so

nterested, as it was all new to her, that she said she knew one of her near neighbors owned such a thing, so she went across the street to borrow it.

It soon began to move, then to write—at first some unimportant message for my friend. Then it began to write a name unfamiliar to me the initials of which were H. H. H. (Only the initials of the first names were given and I will call the last name Husk—which is not the real name as written, say "H. H. Husk.") Then "blood"; "my blood" was written over and over. The name was unfamiliar to my relative also, and it soon grew tiresome to have planchette write just that name and "blood"—and I asked it to desist. Since it did not—and really I had no thoughts of anything grewsome in regard to the word "blood" thinking it one of planchette's freaks—I half playfully asked —"What is the trouble with your blood—perhaps you need some Spring bitters?"

Planchette moved sharply as if in anger at my trifling, then wrote:

H. H. Husk—Blood—is here in this house.
Q.—Cant you tell me what you wish.
A.—H. H. Husk—blood—three men—for money and a price.
Q.—Where is your blood?
A.—Under the cellar stairs.

I was reading the answers as they were given to my friend but when I saw that grewsome statement, which however I did not in the least believe—it at once flashed across my mind that as she already disliked the house and was of a timid nature it would not do to let her know that, and I

said as I carelessly rolled planchette's pencil over the words to erase them, "Something is written which is sheer nonsense. I don't understand it and I can get nothing satisfactory out of this planchette. We may as well give up trying," which she consented to do and I never told her what had been written.

The next morning I went out alone to take a walk and see something of the town. I had not gone far before, happening to look at the sign of a dress-making establishment, I was surprised to see the name "Mrs. Husk, Dress-maker."

A little further along I came across the same name on a physician's office door, which surprised me as showing that the name given was one common in that town, and during the twenty years which have passed since that evening in the old Westfield house from which my relative soon moved, I have come to know from mention in the local papers that the surname given is very common in that town. I have even seen the full initials belonging to a man of that town, H. H. H., the last name which I give here as Husk being a fictitious one for obvious reasons.

But that fact makes me wonder how much truth there was in the hinted-at story given in that old Westfield house of an H. H. Husk, whom three men attacked for "money and a price" and whose "blood" was "under the cellar stairs," and I wonder how far back in time that may have occurred, and why should the wandering spirit have taken advantage of a stranger's knowledge of communication through planchette to hint at his

probably unknown or forgotten tale of woe! Or was it only a "mischievous" spirit's "yarn" gotten up to make me wonder when I came to know how common that name was in that town?

I close this chapter of planchette's doings under my hands with an extract from the article before quoted, showing my own conclusions at that time—conclusions which my later experience in automatic writing has somewhat changed:

"Desirous of thinking more highly of my departed friends, and not caring to renew my acquaintance with them, at least until I myself shall be reduced to their apparently diluted condition of mind and body, I have not the slightest faith in the *spiritual* origin of the things described by Spiritualists, yet I must give my impartial evidence that such things *are* from whatever source they may emanate and hoping earnestly for the day when these things shall all be explained scientifically and reasonably."

CHAPTER XVI.

MISCELLANEOUS TEACHINGS.

As occasionally our unseen friends suggested a change in the wording of our questions, or expressed a wish that we ask them certain questions, we sometimes at the beginning of a sitting asked that questions be suggested from their side, to which once came the reply:

A.—Spiritual ideas are so foreign to delegated co-laborers on your plane that we suggest that all queries come from points of phases viewed by you.

Again:

I requested them to ask some thought-arousing question.

A.—Can you with your circumscribed environments hope to grasp in completion all phases of continued life?

If we failed to put our questions clearly, though we ourselves fully understood the import, very often, instead of the expected answer, would be written such corrections as these: "Can't quite understand, your sentences are too confused;" "Spirit wants stated questions;" "Your thought is all right, but your wording is obscure." "Word your question more clearly," etc.

Indeed our spirit friends have at no time during their communications hesitated to find fault with us on many points. Sometimes they found fault with us after this fashion :

A.—You are too arbitrary in your demands—you are as bigoted in your way as other mortals are in theirs, which you condemn.

Again :

A.—Bhama meets us too captiously. If the most cranky thinker in earth-form called upon him at his home he would treat him with patient courtesy ; but because we cannot appear to him in sense objectivity he does not treat his more spiritual friends with the courtesy he awards to far lower intelligences clothed in mortal vestments. Good-night.

Another time they closed the sitting in like petulant manner, writing—

A.—When B. F. U. is in a less artificial mood, we, his spirit friends and co-laborers, will be glad to come into rapport—to-night it seems impossible.

Once when I had worded a question in a way they did not like, I was told of my fault in this odd style:

A.—You are vague in the manner of mouthing your withinness.

One of their own questions was this:

Won't you tell us what your ideas of angelic beings are? Don't go to explaining what the orthodox angels seem to be, but tell us what you think angels are?

One evening they opened the sitting with:

All are now waiting to get some of B. F. U.'s conundrums.

When asked a question in regard to some worldly affairs we were told to—

Work with the wardens of other spheres to know about such questions.

Again when we asked of them:

Q.—Is there not some personal message you would like to send through us?

A.—Personalities are of but little account on our plane, the Whole of Being is what most interests the thinkers here.

One evening this was written:

Remember that we are using your mediumistic powers in behalf of those with whom you are identified.

Q.—Whom do you mean as being identified with us?

A.—Literary agnostics and pseudo-thinkers.

On another date the writing opened with,

Bold, stalwart thinkers are here.

Q.—We will be pleased to hear from such.

A.—Glad to be welcomed by Agnostics like you.

Q.—Who are you?

A.—A spiritual friend.

Q.—What do you mean by calling us Agnostics —what does that word mean to you?

A.—Philosophically, Agnostic means on the border line between Spiritualism and Materialism.

Q.—Do spirits understand the reasonableness from our point of view of the Agnostic attitude of mind?

A.—Nature as viewed by sense perceptions gives no word of spiritual insight. Blessed are those whose spiritual intuitions bring them in rapport with those of us interested and eager to enlist souls like you two, now and forever in the progress of souls.

Q.—Do spiritual beings live like us in space of three dimensions?

A.—Space of dimensions pertains to matter, and beings outside of matter's limitations cannot

answer your pertinent questions with clear cut meaning to those on your plane of three dimensions. Oh, shall you not sometimes wonder at your own blinded perceptions when your eyes are opened!

Q.—Will you then indicate what trend of thought will be of most use to us until larger knowledge is possible?

A.—Ye should both essay to put into practice the modicum of spiritual teaching we are able to impart.

Q.—Won't you state specifically what that modicum is?

A.—Patience with the limitations of less favored pupils—spiritual aspiration individually, humility because of these soul communications, and knowledge of the power of Love.

Q.—What is one of the leading requisites in the study of spiritual things?

A.—Spiritual teachers and thinkers must see clearly the struggle between the bondage of Materialism and the freedom of Spirit.

Q.—Will you state briefly the distinction between the bondage of Materialism and the freedom of Spirit?

A.—Spiritual life is freedom from material bonds.

Q.—But living in material environments as we do, how can we escape material bondage while in this form?

A.—Thou shalt presently know that sense bonds are not superior to spirit even when in the flesh.

Q.—How do you manage to communicate with us now?

A.—Sir, your aspirations put us on your plane, and we are able to get in rapport with your mind, because that mind is a judicial one, and we recognize the spirit of amity. We all wish to give you atoms of being sure evidence of continued

existence, but ah ! the conditions and environments change everything which otherwise could be made clear.

Q.—Are all those in your sphere able to communicate with people on earth, or are certain individuals chosen for that mission ?

A.—Yes, as men and women are chosen to enter into a larger life, because they are adapted to its requirements.

Q.—And are those here with whom you can communicate also chosen because of their adaptability ?

A.—Should you stop to think a little, your own common sense would insist upon an affirmative answer.

Q.—For what reason were you, who now write us, chosen ?

A.—Have done our best to bring around this state of knowledge.

Q.—How is this choice made ?

A.—Bands of all those desirous of scientific research are formed, and those best adapted to become mediums are set apart to devote themselves to perfecting soul communion with those in the flesh.

Q.—Are your associations for scientific research somewhat like the societies of psychical research on our earth ?

A.—Yes, but so very different, because of the changed conditions.

Q.—What are some of the conditions necessary for communication between your plane and ours?

A.—Conditions depend considerably upon those whom your needs will call upon. None are allowed to control who are not for some cause anxious to get into communication with those left behind.

Q.—Are all spirits on your sphere able to answer correctly all our questions ?

A.—There are among us those who make special inquiry into all new steps in intellectual progress, and it will be necessary to summon each of these in turn to answer different questions.

Q.—How shall we know of whom to ask these questions ?

A.—We will go over that among ourselves, and will let you know to whom to apply, and when.

Q.—Will such communications be of real benefit to us ?

A.—Receive gain by showing you what is possible. Perhaps, we cannot tell until we try. Receive what we are told to say to you by our superiors more in sympathy with you than we are.

When some unimportant message was given in regard to a former acquaintance, we asked that she would give us her impressions as to her change. The intelligence in charge answered thus :

A.—Your friend S. would be as surprised at such questions by us, as her living sister would be surprised if you asked her philosophic questions in regard to that which to you is normal and legitimate.

Q.—Do you wish us to infer that not all spirits understand that communication by writing is possible between their sphere and ours ?

A.—Why, most certainly—and often two or three phases of development are necessary to make such initiated.

Q.—Can you tell us if the change called death is always toward betterment, intellectually and morally ?

A.—Spirits are all more happy than mortals ; supreme love rules, and spirit knows not the sorrows of matter.

Q.—In your sphere is there anything analogous to the class distinctions among men ?

A.—Distinctions are made on this plane as on yours, but on a different basis. Voice of the people don't count with us as with you; genuine qualities are more the standard than appearances. Was not clean living a help to you on your plane even when you seemed unsuccessful so far as mere commercial value went?

Q.—Do all spirits progress on leaving this plane?

A.—There are some who may never reach a higher plane; who change and change for ages without real progress.

Q.—That does not seem to us right or true. It seems to us that there should always be progress possible for every soul?

A.—Yes; but if we should give a charitable hope for such as these who are now over on your side but defining the limitations absolutely necessary, you would say from your narrow view that our explanation was incomplete and unjust—but we are in a position to see further than it is given you to see.

Another evening—holding pen in hand to see if writing could be obtained, this sentence was at once written:

States of consciousness are often produced by evil spirits who delight to dupe sense-mortals.—Pharos.

Q.—How can we ourselves guard against them?

A.—Spurn low associations. Forbid gossiping spirits. Show petty spirits how growth may be obtained spiritually. Help the higher spirits by working with them.

After several trials at requests of friends to try and obtain communications for them from their relatives, which attempts were generally of no

avail, we gave up such attempts which, when made, elicited only such answers as the following :

Q.—Why do you not answer our appeal to you on behalf of M. L., that she may hear from her friends ?

A.—Shall not we who are in rapport with all spiritual entities such as the soul whose earth name you speak, know more fully than your short sight can guess at, the spiritual need of silence from our side, though desire and earthly longing would break and cancel all spiritual law ? Should not a spiritualistic mortal like the sweet soul you mention be disciplined to wait the proper hour for spirit communication ?

Again :

A.—You wish to dictate where you are ignorant of the laws which govern inter-communication between yourselves and those passed to a new phase of existence, but the proper spirit in which to make inquiries of this sort, should be that of serious and earnest answer to our words of questioning, and thoughtful consideration of our meaningful answers.

On a different occasion when we pressed to be told something in regard to another of these, receiving indefinite replies, we asked :

Q.—Please tell us something definite in regard to this person, such as we can report, or explain why you cannot do so ?

A.—Soul states depend on spiritual laws which your material environments do not, and cannot explain. You ask us to give you in a word explanations far beyond your powers of comprehension and beyond our stage of expression to give.

Q.—Are you always in such direct communication with our plane that you are ever aware of what occurs among us ?

A.—All our knowledge of mortal doings is given us from communion with the minds of the mortal individuals with whom we can get into rapport.

At the beginning of a sitting one evening this came first:

Wouldn't affirm that communications to-night shall be from thinkers.

Q.—But we would prefer to hear from thinkers?

A.—Were not those who have called upon you within the week spiritually one with you, yet intellectually were they not on far different knowledge planes?

Now only two persons had called on us during that week, regarding whom this statement was decidedly true; though I should never have distinctly thought of them in just the way stated, yet I recognized immediately the truth in this way of putting it, but interested to find out how they would explain the statement I asked, "What do you mean by that?" Mr. U., who had recognized the fitness of the statement in regard to these particular callers, began to explain to me what he thought I did not understand, but I said, "Wait! I wish to know their own explanation."

A.—That means that what you don't wait for B. F. U. to affirm, is most emphatically true—that spiritual insight may be equal in those who look from greatly differing intellectual standpoints.

Before beginning a sitting one evening we had been speaking of Florence Marryatt's book on Spiritualism, and her Catholic faith.

Q.—Since the Catholic church makes the month of October sacred to the devotion to angels, does

not that imply that it believes in the essential truths of Spiritualism ?"

A.—Belief in man's oneness with the soul of Being—the unfathomable, illimitable Allness, forms part of every form of faith which can take hold strongly of humanity. The Catholic faith is no exception to this rule, and because of its Virgin birth of man's Saviour, born direct of spirit, causes a deeper, stronger hold on the masses who dimly feel without philosophizing, that a spiritual principle rules through all mystery.

Mr. U., who had asked the question to which this answer was given, now said what I had not known, that he had just written an article which had this question for its basis, and now he wished to know whether the thought came from his mind or from that of the intelligence through my hand.

A.—Souls in sympathy express themselves often in like lines of thought, aiding and suggesting when either side feels at a loss. Therefore, B. F. U.'s editorial note formed part of a symphony of thought expression.

I here playfully said that in this "symphony" I was apparently only a tool, as nothing was said of my share in writing it.

A.—Shared equally with us, and with you.

Q.—Can you tell us which is nearer truth, Theosophy or Spiritualism?

A.—Both Theosophy and Spiritualism contain germs of soul truth, but your sphere is so enwarped with phantasms that we who are cognizant of Being's realities may not spiritually explain what to us is very clear.

Q.—Do we not gain higher inspiration from our books at home than by joining societies for mutual culture?

A.—Books are the soul of humanity, the essence of civilization. Your question goes to show that good may come up afresh from distant sources.

Q.—But is there not much also to be gained by discussions of the questions of the day in these societies?

A.—Clamor of minds is as the clash of arms in ancient tournaments—necessary to draw attention to deep thinking and high living.

Q.—Will our love of music, never fully gratified here, be satisfied when we reach your state?

A.—Soul will find expression through music here. Your love of rhythm, and of the sacred symphonies of music will be satisfied when you join us.

B. F. U.—Why is Sara so exceedingly fond of flowers?

A.—Flowers are the essence of sensuous Spiritualism, and she, and all who like her are in sympathy with the beautiful models given as symbols to human souls, are forced to recognize the Divine atoms of Being in whatever form manifested.

Q.—What do you mean by Atoms of Being?

A.—By this term we desire to state as clearly as possible in your circumscribed voicing the relation your ephemeral state holds to the great All-of-Being. Flowers are atoms of Being in sharing with all other atoms persistence toward the source whence they emanate.

Q.—What does what we name "beauty" mean to those on your plane?

A.—Beauty is only a word formulated by you to express the secret of spiritual soul-life. You feel deeply the power of spirit love, and that which your limited language names Beauty—which to us means Radiance of spirit—the effulgence of Lovingness—the riotous waste of loving energy every-

where cropping out—that you call Beauty. In spirit spheres it is called Love!

On a recent evening communication was opened in these words:

Thirst for spiritual draughts of wisdom is shown by your wish for words from our side.

Q.—Will you indicate what you would prefer to be the programme for this evening?

A.—Spiritual tests of divine knowledge will be given if cared for.

Q.—Please indicate what you would prefer as the subject?

A.—Shall not the words of the poet Pope be given as evidence of spirit power?

Q.—To What words do you refer?

A.—Lend, lend your wings—I mount, I fly,
O, Grave where is thy Victory?
O, Death where is thy Sting?

Q.—Please then give us your definition of what we here name Death?

A.—Death is the password and ticket which will give to those earth-born and troubled with the mysteries of your sphere, the open sesame to spheres of Being of which you have not yet been given the libretto.

Q.—Are there changes of form or feelings which correspond with what we term Death, in the life beyond this?

A.—Thou sayest words which are full of meaning to those who are anxious to teach such as you and Bhama what little of spirit wisdom is here given. Forms often change when higher spheres open to such as you, but the bitterness of pain elaborated through your sense-born state is never repeated on higher planes, which give higher experiences of pleasureable evolution as you grow upward.

B. F. U.—Has the doctrine of Karma as taught by the Theosophists any basis in fact?

A.—Will Bhama succinctly state his idea of what the word Karma means?

Q.—That every person's happiness or suffering is the natural and just result of that person's pre-existent lives.

A.—Plans of lives then you think, are arranged without consulting the individualistic Atoms of Being who are to serve as awful examples of depravity, or the rarer beings like Emerson, who show fullness of spiritual flower and fruit?

Q.—That would seem to be the Theosophical idea—but I am not now expressing my individual idea.

A.—Showest thou that the philosophies of mortal atoms are filled with unproven and unprovable vagaries which such as thou and our scribe Sara should put far away when we are ready to give you the truth.

Q.—Will you then please give us in brief the truth in relation to the doctrine of Karma?

A.—The truth of Karma is most briefly stated in the words of our elder brother that "whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap."

Q.—Does that mean that there is no progression after the change of death?

A.—No—most emphatically—but progress does not imply that "becoming" or evolution, may not include also remorseful efforts to overcome the victories of the animalistic nature—by means of retributive payment of just debts.

Q.—Have you anything more to say on the subject of Karma tonight?

A.—More some other time. This is a question of far more import than you yet understand, but we here are not yet clear about it, and so would prefer to defer its discussion until we ourselves re-open it.

CHAPTER XVII.

MISCELLANEOUS TEACHINGS.—[CONTINUED.]

WORDS OF CHEER.

Though your friendly soul is sad—
Fear not—out from this muddled age,
Shall come the best that may be had
To teach those yet upon earth's stage

That through earth's mysteries there runs
A thread of God-like symphony,
Which makes for Righteousness, as suns
In universes show how free

And true the power of Love divine
Goes on and on with no surcease;
Should not the power of spirit shine
As strong, to give pure souls' release

From earthly bonds of prisoning power,
Which strong assert their lower state;
And bind with thongs the worst and lower
Earth elements which keep from great

And high achievement, earnest souls
Who've wakened to the Spirit call;
The troubled ones who seek the goals
Which are the ultimate of all

Whose quest has been the higher spheres
Of Spirit, seeking spirit aims,
The sweet love-sharing, daring, tiers
Of Spirits whose accepted claims

Of larger knowledge, higher powers—
And Love beyond earth's small area;
Shall soon give mortals larger dowers
Of heavenly wisdom in earth's sphere.

Shall not we now bid you Good-night
Our grateful, willing, earthly friend;
Whose worldly paths may lead to light,
And whose last doubt may through us end

In spiritual faith too strong to doubt
One statement from our higher point
Of view—whence we look in and out
Beyond your world so out of joint.

The above poem, which was written rapidly by my hand without any pause for thought, was given in response to my mood of sadness and discouragement on that evening. It was all new and beautiful to my mind as the rhythmic verses appeared one after another without pause; and I wish to call the reader's attention to the fact that the end of each verse, save the seventh and last, leaves the sense of the thought conveyed unfinished, necessitating another verse; nor could I from the last word of one verse make any correct guess as to what the opening words of the succeeding one would likely be. A friend who read this poem before its publication, thought the rhythm and thought savored of Tennyson, but Pharos is the only author so far as I know.

In view of the constant assertions made by our unseen friends that life's bitterest trials are but ephemeral, and that viewed from their standpoint what we call evil is really good in another guise.

I asked one evening when Boehme purported to be in control, how he viewed his own earthly sorrows now ?

A.—Bitter was the cup which spiritual powers compelled me to drink when on your plane. In the light of my higher knowledge on this plane, I am only sorry that even more bitter draughts were not offered me while with such as you, to give blessed cause for the joys I now experience. Be of good cheer, children of truth, ye shall reap tenfold what ye sow in tears and fearfulness.

Bearing in mind the frequent statements from this source that spirit sympathy counted for more in spiritual spheres than mere blood relationship and recalling the family misunderstandings which attended the lives of many men and women of genius, I asked :

Q.—Can you make clear to me the spiritual reasons of the misunderstanding by blood relations of such superior souls as Elizabeth Barrett Browning, George Eliot, Percy Shelley, George Sand, Coleridge and others ?

A.—Superior souls born to earth-life with blood spontaneous of lower spheres, are so environed to test their worthiness for higher spheres of relationship when realized conditions are arrived at by reason of change of form.

Q.—How shall we best get at the truth in spiritual matters ?

A.—By greater spiritual perception of virtue, wisdom, love—philosophical weighing of evidence —try the spirits—use human judgment and reason in spiritual matters.

S. A. U.—Can you tell us what is the best way to reach the higher spirit spheres ?

B. F. U.—It isn't at all likely that there is any short cut to them.

A.—Love for all humanity is the "short cut."

Q.—It is not then the intellect so much as the heart—the affectional part of our nature which developes spirituality?

A.—Intellectual development depends largely upon the love element for sustenance and power.

Q.—Salvation then comes through love?

A.—Salvation through love always—never through mere philosophic attainments.

Q.—What is love?

A.—Soul essence.

Q.—What do you understand by the word "God?"

A.—God means only Being.

Q.—What is goodness?

A.—Growing toward the Light.

Q.—Are spirits in all spheres happy?

A.—Spirits are all more happy than mortals. Supreme Love rules, and spirit knows not the sorrows of matter.

Still many times intimations were given of lower planes less happy than the higher. One characteristic communication of this sort came from one whom Mr. U. had casually met in a business way while living, and after some words of a personal nature, came this:

A.—Bold thinkers like you don't understand with what strange curiosity poor fellows who had no chance to read or think, like me, try to find out in our new sphere why things are as they are.

Again, when some unimportant message was given in regard to a former acquaintance, we asked that she would give us her impressions as to her change. The intelligence in charge answered thus:

Your friend S. would be as surprised at such questions by us, as her living sister would be sur-

prised if you asked her philosophic questions in regard to that which to you is normal and legitimate.

Q.—Do you wish us to infer that not all spirits understand that communication by writing is possible between their sphere and ours ?

A.—Why, most certainly—and often two or three phases of development are necessary to make such initiated.

B. F. U.—Why does not R. C. U. now communicate some word to me through Sara, since he cared so much for me when here ?

A.—He is drawn to others of the family, where his presence is of more avail.

When asked how he felt when he realized his transition, one wrote :

A.—When I woke up from my state of unconsciousness and found that only a change of form and conditions had occurred in the transition which we call death, I was so surprised that I had an idea that I was insane.

Another was asked :

Q.—Can you give us some information as to your new life—is it better than earth life ?

A.—Have not words to explain ; it's better, but you wouldn't guess how.

Q.—Are you troubled about leaving your little boy behind ?

A.—We don't worry about folks here, as we do when men and women as you are.

Once when Mr. U. was writing a question, he asked :

Q.—Can you read the question I am now writing?

A.—Not as on paper—but as dimly defined in your mind.

Q.—Then you can read our minds?—in what way?
A.—Mind at once assimilates with mind—objective forms are media.

An odd incident of the automatic writing was as follows: In the early part of my experience among many varying chirographies written by my pen, there frequently appeared a queer sort of writing which I had never seen anything like, and only once since in some signatures obtained by another automatic writer who has never seen my specimens. I call it spiral writing, because each letter is made by spiral movements of the pen, instead of going straightly as in common writing. Much of this I could not myself read, though occasionally a word would be very plain. One day I wished to write something, having been requested to do so, on "The Sphere of Woman." It occurred to me that I might try to get the ideas of some greater thinkers than myself on the subject, and I wrote down on a piece of paper the names of an equal number of men and women now on the other side of life, who I knew had been, while here, interested in the woman question—such as John Stuart Mill, Harriet Martineau, etc., and hoped to get something characteristic from some of these in the evening when Mr. U. was present, as I can not get communications by myself. I did not in this list put the name of Victor Hugo, although I knew of his interest, for the reason that his name did not once occur to my mind.

When evening came I took out this list, read aloud the names written there and asked if any of these were present, then waited pen in hand for

developments. The pen began at once to move, making large letters in the spiral manner and wrote so that each word went nearly across the page as follows :

ONLY
VICTOR
HUGO.

The forcefulness of this characteristic rebuke of my utter forgetfulness of this ardent yet self-conscious friend of my sex, struck me with astonishment—it was so unexpected !

But though Victor Hugo or whoever took his name and characteristics had the floor—or the pen —for that evening (as no other writers came) yet all the expression of his ideas in regard to woman's sphere was given in one sentence in smaller spiral letters :

The sphere of woman widens with the progress of the race.

It may be interesting to give here a few replies in regard to certain thinkers, as a sample of many such, which of course are not accepted as authoritative, though provocative of thought :

Q.—Did G. H. Lewes during his lifetime know anything in regard to such spirit spheres as you describe ? Did he believe in continued existence ?

A.—Lewes was not given power to understand, but he did noble work—all the nobler that he worked in the dark.

Q.—How was it with George Eliot ?

A.—George Eliot hoped. She did not know ; she did not deny.

H.—What, from your point of view, do you think of Herbert Spencer's philosophy?

A.—Spencer is working on spurious grounds. He is very helpful, but he is working blindly from want of correct data.

When it is remembered that the only two persons present when the foreging was written were far from supposing or believing that Spencer works from incorrect data, the answer is the more surprising.

Q.—Will you tell us from your point of view who is the most spiritual thinker America has produced?"

A.—Rest assured that when we are sure that America has produced one zone of thinkers wherein shines one star preëminent, we will gladly name the star.

This reply was entirely unexpected, as I had in mind Emerson, and thought likely that name would be written. When, however, we asked if they would name some who had "most nearly approximated to high spiritual truth," the following names were given: "Emerson, John Brown, Theodore Parker, Wendell Phillips, Wm. Lloyd Garrison, Charles Sumner. Ask who were most useful?"

Q.—Well, who were the most useful thinkers of America?

A.—Searchers after real truths; such as Thomas Paine, Channing, Parker, Lydia Maria Child, Margaret Fuller and others akin.

All the names given most certainly would not be the leading names in a list of my own choice. The intelligence writing seeming to be in sympathy with the leading radical thinkers of an earlier time.

Q.—Will our friend L. who is here so deeply

interested in philosophical and scientific questions but yet rejects scornfully the possibility of continued existence, ever become convinced while here of spirit return?

A.—He eventually must be one with us, but he is prejudiced by pride of mortal learning. Pride is the hardest thing to overcome in mankind.

Q.—What is your explanation of pride?

A.—Pride is the outcome of narrowness of spiritual vision, a hardening, so to speak, of the moral nature.

Q.—What is the cause of pride?

A.—Short-sightedness of intellect.

APHORISMS.

Scattered through all this writing in which it will be seen the Socratic method of conversational question and answer has been mainly observed—are many pithy sentences detached from the general communications. I give here a few of those I have preserved :

Bow not at command of spirit, in the flesh or out.

Shun alliance with all who have only self in view.

Souls worthy of control must show courage. Troy was not gained in one battle.

Search for truth during the year now opening and fear not to speak when found. Search yet further and ye shall penetrate spiritual wonders. Your spirit of obedience to the truth will lead you to the light.

Saul of Tarsus was as strong in opposition to spirit law as ye were, yet spirit power made him, spite of his own counter will, the Apostle of Apostles of Christianity. So shall it be with you.

All who are in accord with great truths must ever receive contempt from guessers at the realities.

True friends are those who know us for what we are.

Agitate! Round goes the world, and round go ideas.

Ever denial does arouse children to amend their ways.

Soul passes through many phases, but each progressive phase gives new light as to the possibilities of the Me and higher spheres.

> The self-conceit of mortal man
> Is but a part of the eternal plan.

Elevate as much as you can, render good for evil, slender as the opportunities are. Be faithful to your best ideals and good will come.

Ever goes on the work of years, though seen not of all.

Philosophers are universal souls—creations of universal helpfulness.

On our side, truths of existence called supernatural, are not above nature, but are most surely in the line of orderly evolution.

Shames and sorrows are the most essential points of earth's discipline of soul, therefore shrink not from your personal ordeals which must guide to happiness.

Bear in mind that what you call value with us is valueless.

Elevate, even if you are anathemized—elevate mankind by more loving modes of thinking.

Well said the thinker of old, that no man who tells truth can buy friendship.

You will find that human reason is so limited that it is far from infallible—many links apparent here are missing from your patched chain.

Eons must pass before Emersonian conduct can be expected of all.

Truth is Lord of all.

Blessed are all who seek wisdom.

Barren souls are full of doubt, but lovers of

truth will ever grow nearer to spiritual enlightenment.

Love toward all, even the meanest of your kind, is the highest truth.

Selfish aims crave food which no good spirit can satisfy.

Slay not your spiritual opportunity by carping self conceit.

Wonders must ever awaken criticism and antagonism.

Show no wrath at stunted spirit perceptions—good-nature ever prevails.

Wasn't he the best son, who altho' he said that he was burdened with many cares and could not do what was asked of him, yet on reconsideration concluded to do as his sense of justice demanded?

Who changes worlds will be spared many cares.

Blessed are all those who divine their mental allies.

Waste not tears o'er hours miss spent,
But strive more strongly to prevent
Ghosts of errors to withdraw
Earnest workers from Love's law.

Storms within the soul's area
Stand as spirit pointers clear
Showing where thy compass fails
Soul force to work with close-reefed sails.

Love is life—and gained, you'll heed
No more the silly worldlings greed
Of wealth which dies; like rainbow hues
Changes while the gazer views.

Comfort still may yet be found
Within the range where you are bound;
Throw off the gainful bonds of pelf—
Rise, soul, above the plane of self!

CHAPTER XVIII.

SOME PSYCHIC INCIDENTS.

WAS IT A WARNING?

A certain experience which accurred to me at a time when I had no belief in spirit existence always puzzled my mind, so that when my thought recurred to it I was wont to think: "Well, if I could believe in spiritual warning I should say that was a case in point."

Late in the autumn of 1871 I was returning from California where I had accompanied Mr. U. on one of his lecturing trips. At Cheyenne he left me, having engagements at Denver and other places, which, having visited on the outward trip, I did not care to accompany him to, as I was tired of travel and anxious to return home. A group of us east-bound tourists, strangers to each other before and after that time, affiliated as travelers often do, and kept in the same party until in approaching Chicago our routes diverged. In the few days we were thus thrown together, I had got to know the names and something of the history of each of these, but as was my habit when thus traveling, while social as the others, I had revealed nothing in regard to my own affairs, personal history or ultimate destination, save perhaps my last name—possibly not even that.

How well I recall each individual of that pleasant group! There was an elderly man, a long time

widower, whose refined and cultured manners did not proclaim that he had lived for a number of years in Western mining towns, where he had acheived at least independence and had established his two sons in good professions and was now on his way east to visit his two daughters whom he had left in the care of a relative to be thoroughly educated and whom he had not seen since they were little girls, though now they were young ladies ; then there was a bright and pretty young married woman from Ashtabula, who had been away a year in the California mountains to recover her health, and was now returning to her husband and little child, and the young Californian who on a visit the year before to his home in New York had wooed and won a charming girl—at least he told us so—and was then on his way to make her his bride. He took especial pains, I remember, to keep his really fine complexion in good order for the wedding day by carefully shielding it from winds and sun with a green veil which he wore when out prospecting at stations where there was any delay, and took advantage of such delays also to send messages to his lady-love.

Last was "Annie," an irrepressible California girl just passed into her teens, whom our party took charge of when we noticed her reckless patronage of the peanut venders and booksellers on the train, and found her lying asleep in her seat in the middle of the day with an open pocket-book in her lap containing the last dollar she possessed to buy food for several days ahead, and her railroad ticket taking her only within a hundred

miles of her destination. She had lived from childhood with an aunt in California, but her mother in the East having married a second husband, "Annie," had been sent on alone to her. Sufficient money had been given her to buy food and the remainder of the fare, but it was her first experience with money and she accordingly squandered it. The miner promised to see that she reached her destination and the rest of us shared our meals with her.

Of this group I was the first to leave, as I wished to visit some friends about one hundred miles west of Chicago, and to do so would be obliged to remain over Sunday at a lonely junction, as no trains ran Sunday on the road by which I must go to that place.

The conductor on the train advised me not to stop at the Junction, but to get off at C., a large town in Iowa which we reached a few miles earlier, for said he, "though there's a kind of hotel there at the Junction, it isn't a good one and the place is lonely and your train won't come along until nine o'clock Monday morning."

But as I remembered that at C., where I had never been, were some friends of Mr. U. who had often invited me to make them a visit, and who would feel hurt if they came to know I had passed a day there without calling on them, and I was in so dusty and dilapidated a condition from long days of traveling I did not care to see any one, I concluded to go on to the Junction.

We reached there Sunday morning about eight o'clock; there were some changes to be made at

this point and the train was delayed for a little in consequence, so the cars shut off one side of my view as I got out at a most decidedly lonely-looking station. I looked round for the "hotel" the conductor had spoken of, and the only house I could see was a somewhat large frame building, over the open front door of which the word "Restaurant" had been painted large, but had either faded out or been thinly painted, or whitewashed over, but was still plainly discernable.

I concluded that must be the apology for a hotel of which the conductor had spoken, so satchel in hand I walked over to it. There was a short, thick-set, poorly-dressed old man, with dull eyes and phlegmatic features walking up and down behind what had apparently once been a bar, but the shelves behind it were empty, as the room was. I hesitated, but as this was apparently my only refuge, I said inquiringly:

"Is this the hotel?

"Yes, I suppose you may call it so," he replied.

I stated my case and asked if I could get breakfast at once and stay over night. He led me into a room adjoining where a tall, gaunt, hard featured woman about fifty or sixty years old was smoking a short pipe while she was "trying" out lard from a recently-killed porker. He introduced her as his wife, and she looked me over quite interestedly and said she would get breakfast right away. I did not like the looks of the place, but saw no help for it and left my satchel there while I went back to the depot to see if my baggage had been put under shelter.

By this time the train had moved on, and I could see at quite a little distance on the other side another house of much better appearance, and just then a young, respectable looking fellow about eighteen appeared and asked if I wished to go to the hotel, pointing to the newly-discovered house. "Are there two hotels here?" I asked. "I understood there was but one, and I have ordered breakfast over there," indicating the dilapidated "Restaurant" in the distance.

He looked at me strangely, I thought, and said, "I don't think you'd like to stay there Ma'am. They are queer people. You had better come to our house."

"Come with me then," I replied, "and get my satchel which I have left there, and I'll tell them I've changed my mind."

As we started toward the "Restaurant" I noticed he seemed somewhat disturbed, then he remarked, "If you will bring the satchel out, Ma'am, I'll carry it over, but I'd rather not go in. As I told you they are queer folks and I don't want to get into trouble."

I did not know what to make of it all, but I went in alone and said that I had been informed that the other house was the station hotel and had concluded to go over there and stay, when the woman broke out into a stormy talk, saying she had gone to the trouble of getting breakfast for me and the other house was jealous of their custom and I would be better dealt with here than there, etc; so perceiving some truth in these statements, I concluded to save trouble by remaining, as it was

only a matter of twenty-four hours, and I was used to putting up with inconveniences in my western travels, so I dismissed the "runner" for the other hotel who looked as if he wanted to say something further to me; but he walked quietly away.

But I did get a good wholesome breakfast, dinner and supper served, which helped do away with the annoying suspicions aroused by the woman's continual questioning as to the riches of California and Californians. I told her truthfully that both were overmuch rated, that there was much suffering among common people there as elsewhere, but she looked as if she did not believe it.

I was not really suspicious of this couple, but I did not like the atmosphere, and when at ten p. m. I was shown to my room upstairs—a small room uncarpeted, save one small rug in front of the old-fashioned corded bedstead, covered with shabby bedding, one window covered with a green paper curtain, one chair and a diminutive wooden stand its sole furniture, I was without any distinct worry regarding my lodging until the hostess as she opened the door remarked with a searching glance at me, "There ain't any lock to this door, but, we are all honest folks here, and you needn't be afraid."

If she had not said that, I think I should not have taken the precautions which I did. My satchel contained the various odds and ends which I had learned to keep by me in traveling, among which were two pair of scissors, with one of these I secured the old-fashioned latch over the door and with the other the window. I noticed that the

kerosene lamp on the chair by the bedside was nearly full of oil and I had a well-filled match safe with me so I put some matches loose on the chair beside the lamp.

Although so late and on a Sunday night, in a place where I could not discover any neighbors nearer than the other "hotel," and during the whole day no one had appeared in sight but the old couple, soon after I retired to my room I heard strange voices—two male voices apparently in conversation with the couple down stairs; a little boisterous at first, but soon lowered, and finally after eleven o'clock all ceased and quietness reigned.

I wondered somewhat, but concluded it might be other travelers seeking lodgings for the night. I was not actively suspicious, but only in a rather quiet state of guardedness, and as the sounds died away, I grew satisfied all was right, put out my light, and toward midnight fell into sleep. From this sleep I was awakened suddenly and in the strangest way. I seemed to be bounced upward by some strong force underneath the loosely corded bed!

I was wide awake in a moment and felt for the matches at the bedside, but before I could strike a light the same force was again exerted and I was bounced in a very vigorous fashion upward. My hands trembled as I tried to light the lamp and I let the short match burn my fingers rather than risk time to light another, for I was positively certain some large person was under my bed, and the moment the lamp was lighted I sprang out of

bed, lamp in hand, and crouched by the wall opposite the bed fully expecting to meet the eyes of the intruder under the bed, which stood so high that I could plainly see every inch of the bare board floor underneath—but I could see nothing more. There was no one there! I thought of a possible trap door and examined the floor carefully for trace of such, but there was none!

Just then I fancied I heard a light click at the door latch which resisted by reason of the scissors, then as I moved toward the door the sound of some one moving softly away in the next room, a sitting-room covered with thick rag-carpeting, and so down the stairs. I then looked at my watch and found it was near one o'clock. I slept no more and kept the light burning all that terribly long night, thankful that the pain of my burned finger helped me keep awake, though nothing more occurred.

In those long and tedious hours I had time to think of the really precarious situation I was in should anything happen to me. Not a soul of my acquaintance could guess where I stopped off, as the stoppage of Sunday trains was a recent arrangement, otherwise I should have gone direct to my destination. None of my late traveling friends knew my full name, address or antecedents, and only the young clerk of the house some distance away, knew any one was stopping at the queer "Restaurant." All trace of me could and would have been lost.

But when I went down stairs in the morning I was ready to laugh at my fears as the landlady

gave me a scrutinizing stare and said in a commonplace way :

"I hope you slept well—did'nt hear anything in the night nor nothing, I suppose ?"

"O dear no !" I answered lightly. "I had a fair night's rest."

"I told ye so—we're all honest folk about here, you bet," she remarked.

I was, however, glad to get away soon after breakfast before she saw the tell-tale lamp whose exhausted supply of oil would speak of my vigils. I was charged the best city hotel price for my entertainment, but saw no trace of the visitors of the night before, nor was any mention made of them. Of one thing, however, I was as sure as physical sensation could make me—that was of the reality of the queer bouncing or shaking up I had received. Never before or since have I experienced such sensations as those two strong upheavals gave me—and I wondered!

Now my readers are ready to smile at my foolish scare—but let me relate the sequel.

Several months later Mr. U. was lecturing at a town not far from the scene of my scare, and we were staying at the principal hotel there—not a large one—where also came many people from country farms and places within twenty miles to hear the lecture. One day at the dinner table a party of us were discussing hotel accommodations in different places and I told of my experience at the Junction, giving the name of the station and describing the old people, etc. One gentleman at the table looked at me strangely as I concluded.

"I live near there," he said, "and I must tell you that you ought to think yourself a pretty lucky person to get off as well as you did. The old folks and two dare-devil sons used to keep a sort of rogues' headquarters for all sorts of bad characters, but just before the date of which you speak, the sheriff had arrested the sons for a bold robbery, for which they are now serving time, and ordered the place dismantled and shut up. There isn't money enough in this country, madam, to make me take the risks you did by staying in that hole."

This, then, explained the empty shelves behind the deserted bar, the partly obliterated sign-board, and the young clerk's fear to enter and his warning to me; also perhaps the late visitors who dare not be seen in the day time—but who can explain the strange upheaving force which woke me from sleep and which was the cause of my keeping awake? I have thought of that incident very gravely and thankfully since I came to understand that we have interested friends in the unseen world as well as in the world of sense.

FOUND THROUGH A DREAM.

The lady to whom the following taken from my diary relates, is a good Baptist friend to whom the very name of Spiritualism is shocking, and who is entirely unacquainted with the modern experiments or experiences in psychic science. I took pains to ask about every point of her story after she related it to me, and wrote it out immediately, as follows:

January 2, 1892, Mrs. O. stopped at my sitting-room door on her way down stairs this morning.

She held in her hand a small white paper box with a dark blue, almost black, label in the center, which she showed me as she told her story. She said that during Christmas week she had been exhibiting to some caller a couple of valuable rings which she had owned for years, but had given up wearing of late; after her caller went away she carried them back to her bedroom upstairs intending to put them in her jewelry case where she kept them, but before she could do so she was called down stairs suddenly, and hastily put them down somewhere, intending to return and put them away.

When she thought of them again she supposed she had put them in their usual place. It happened that on the evening of the same day Mr. O. had occasion to look over some private papers which he kept in a large box in a closet in the bedroom. This box he always kept locked with the key in his possession. When he found the paper he wished he looked it over, then put it back in the box which he locked and returned to its usual place.

On New Year's day, in consequence of wishing to put some new holiday gifts of jewelry in the box where she thought her rings were, Mrs. O. went to her jewelry box and was surprised to find the rings and the bit of soft pink wool on which she kept them, missing. She then remembered leaving the room hurriedly when she was going to replace them; so thinking she must have misplaced them, she searched the room and every other place she could think of, where they might be, all New Year's day, by spells, without finding them, and

Mr. O. helped her in the search, but nowhere could they be found. She went to bed that night very much worried and perplexed about the matter.

The next morning—*this* morning—she woke up suddenly about four o'clock when it was still dark with the recollection of a vivid dream strongly outlined in her mind. She dreamed of opening Mr. O.'s private box and seeing in it a small white paper box with a *black* label in the center. She noticed the black label with a start of fear, thinking it might mean mourning for some one, but on opening the small box there lay on top the bit of pink wool on which she usually kept her rings, and lifting the wool she dreamed there lay her two missing rings.

So vivid was the dream that, early as it was and the room very cold, she woke her husband, made him get her the key to the private box, and in her bare feet went to the closet where it was kept, opened it and the first thing which caught her eye on top was the little box she showed m and which was an unfamiliar one to her, and opening it the pink wool was found in it, with the rings underneath, just as she had dreamed!

Then, Mr. O. recalled that just as he was closing his large box he had seen the bit of pink wool with the two rings laying carelessly in an open drawer; so for safety he put them in the little box which he found somewhere near, and threw it in the box with his private papers and locked the large box, intending to speak to Mrs. O. about her carelessness, but he found callers down stairs when he went, who stayed late, so the matter

escaped his mind, and he did not think of it again until the box and rings were found through her remarkable dream. The only difference in the dream and the facts being that the real box had a *dark blue* instead of the black label she was shown in her dream.

At another time Mrs. O. related to me the particulars of another dream which was prophetic. She had for a number of years a valued servant to whom she was much attached because of her faithful service. The servant left her to marry a worthless sort of fellow, with whom she lived unhappily. Mrs. O. kept track of her by spells, but after a long silence she one night dreamed that she saw "Mollie" lying very ill, and her body was dreadfully swollen, that soon she died, and when the coffin was brought it had to be brought up and carried out through the window, as the stairway was too narrow.

This dream so worried Mrs. O. that she hunted "Mollie" up, found her sick with dropsy and near death, and she had been longing to see Mrs. O., but Mrs. O. having recently moved, could not send word. A week or two later she died, and the coffin was brought up and carried out through a window, much to Mrs. O.'s distress, who was present and thus saw her dream fulfilled. There were other incidents of this dream as remarkable as the one stated, but I have forgotten the particulars, not having written them down as told.

Will we ever on this side of life, I wonder, get at a knowledge of the law underlying these prophetic and revealing dreams which we all

know do occasionally occur, but which we, none of us can command? Are they sent *only* occasionally to show us how limited the earth-life is, and to give us hints of the wider knowledge contained in the region of the unseen?

HOW DID HE HEAR AND SEE?

The present inquiry and investigation by scientific men in regard to the reality and cause of telepathic hearing and seeing, recall an incident which occurred within my knowledge some thirty years ago. It was so strange that it has always remained distinctly in my mind, although at that time I knew of no possible way to explain the occurrence as I had then no knowledge of any similar incident.

One afternoon in a village in Massachusetts my mother who had considerable practical knowledge of childrens' ailments had been sent for by a neighbor to give advice in regard to the illness of a lad about seven years old, who had taken cold and seemed to be feverish. She was absent an hour or so. I was alone in the house when she returned, and engaged in reading. She sat down near me and soon I observed that she was deeply absorbed in thought with a very puzzled look in her eyes, so much so that she seemed almost oblivious of my presence, and thinking the child might be seriously ill, I recalled her attention by asking as to his condition. She said he did not appear to be in any immediate danger though he seemed to have some fever, and his mind was a little wandering in consequence whenever he dropped asleep.

"But there was a very curious thing happened while I was there" my mother went on with a perplexed look—"and I don't know what to make of it at all." Thereupon she related as follows: I must state first that the seven year old lad, Eddie, who was ill and who was a child of good and pacific inclinations, had a ten year old brother, Jimmie, who was of a mischievious disposition, and Eddie was constantly worried by his brother's actions when at play together.

On this occasion Jimmie, the elder, was out somewhere at play, where or with whom his mother did not know. Busied with the sick child she was only too glad to have him out of the way. Eddie having been given some quieting medicine seemed dropping to sleep, when suddenly he startled the two watching women by springing from his pillow and crying excitedly "Stop that! Stop that, Jimmie! Stop striking Georgie B., I say!" His mother thinking he was dreaming, said—"You're dreaming, Eddie. See, Jimmie is'nt here—he's out doors at play somewhere."

But the child, half crying with sympathy and distress as if he saw the scene, went on still excitedly—"Oh mamma, why don't you make him stop hurting Georgie? See there! he has thrown Georgie's hat over Mr. L's high fence and Georgie is crying so hard—You're a bad boy, Jimmie!"

The women pacified him soon and he dropped again into sleep—and both thought little of the matter save that a realistic dream had visited the the fevered brain. They both knew the little boy mentioned and knew the high fence spoken of was

some two or three blocks away with a considerable number of houses intervening. But what made Eddie's dream so strange to them was that after just about the time it would take a boy to traverse the distance between the high fence spoken of and Eddie's home, the door-bell rang and Eddie's mother going to the door (which was within my mother's range of sight and hearing) was confronted by hatless, weeping, angry little Georgie B. who had run to tell Jimmie's mother of that bad boy's action in beating him and throwing his hat over Mr. L's high, close fence, where it was impossible for this abused lad to recover it without help.

And this was the question that perplexed my mother, By what power came Eddie, even in a dream, to describe so perfectly at the moment of its occurrence a scene taking place such a distance away when he was sick in bed and no one present knew where in the village Jimmie might be straying, nor who of all the village boys was his companion. We both thought it "very strange" and were obliged to let it pass at that. Will psychical science sometime in the near future enable us to explain satisfactorily this ignorant, simple child's experience?

CHAPTER XIX.

CORROBORATIVE TESTIMONY.

If this volume reaches the people I most desire to reach—those who (like myself before these experiences came to me) are in a state of doubt in regard to continuity of existence and individual consciousness beyond the grave, I am sure that many of the assertions made to me through automatic writing will be received by such readers with much doubt. Earthly experience teaches us that anything out of the usual and common ruts of daily living, needs not only the avowed similar experiences of a few persons, but of a large number of sane, responsible and trustworthy individuals who have been proved hitherto truthful and level-headed in all the other transactions of life.

All Spiritualists know full well that their faith no longer depends on individual testimony, or their own personal experiences—they know that "a great cloud of witnesses" has from time to time, and is now daily receiving in various forms of communication such as clairvoyance, clairaudience, direct voicing, trance condition, impersonations, impression, automatic and direct writing, and other ways—information of a like character with that contained in this book, varying only in the less or larger knowledge gained by spirits in different spheres and of differing degrees of intelligence or spirit education.

For myself I did not in the beginning of this writing know this fact for a certainty by reason of my blindness, from lack of investigation of the subject, largely arising from the doubt produced in my mind by reading of the frauds perpetrated by those spiritual criminals, dishonest public mediums, who, like some clergymen, profess a religion for the money to be made out of it.

I must own that my intellectual as well as spiritual vision and outlook have been wonderfully widened and enlarged through the writing given through my hand. I have been surprised over and over again by the new light thrown from this source upon many subjects. Even the old Bible has taken on new reading of familiar words by reason of it. But one of the pleasantest surprises to me has been the corroborative testimony I have lately found given through many different persons such as Andrew Jackson Davis, Prof. Robert Hare, Stainton Moses, Hudson Tuttle and many others, besides that found in the writings of the earlier mystics, like Paracelsus, Boehme and Swedenborg, not forgetting St. Paul—of all the intimations regarding spirit life and spheres, given through my hand independent of any previous ignorance and belief on the part of myself. All the matter, philosophy and ideas so new to me when thus written, I now find have been taught to many others from the spiritual side of life, in some such like mysterious manner as I myself have received them.

As delightfully gratifying has it been to receive still further and quite as strong confirmation of

similarity of spirit statements from a large number of sane, educated, thoughtful, truthful men and women, some of whom are more than commonly judicial and capable of weighing carefully the pros and cons on any subject; who since the publication of my *Arena* article on "Psychic Experiences" have privately confessed to like experiences on their own part from which they had gained information similar in purport to that given in the earlier chapters of this book.

There would be, of course, if my experience were wholly isolated in the method of its coming and the substance of its information, reason for very strong doubt of its truth and consistency of statements; but in the face of this large and easily proven consensus of testimony of a like character, dating from far earlier times up to today, it certainly proves itself a matter worthy of careful thought, not to be dismissed with the sneer of flippant scorn, or the jeering, easily adopted, laughter of ignorance.

From the large number of letters containing contributions to the overwhelming mass of testimony obtainable in regard to the truth of spirit return, I give in this Chapter a few extracts out of the many letters received by me from those who are not public mediums and the most of whom are not generally known among their personal acquaintances as believers in Spiritualism:

A lady in Michigan writes:

"It was with great interest I read Mr. U.'s article in the *Arena* describing your 'automatic' writing. The same phenomena had shown itself

in my own case and it had caused me some physical suffering. My best writing is done when I am entirely alone, yet I have tried a few tests for friends and in their presence received messages from 'spirit' friends which were perfectly satisfactory in every way to the recipient. I have a young sister who for a few weeks received the writing, but she is unable at present to get it. While she was able to write she was teaching a country school, and to me it was quite a trial to have no way of communication with her for weeks at a time. I said to her: 'If the spirits wish to do us a service, they might carry our messages while you are away at 'school.' So she and I agreed to sit down at a certain hour every day for a week and try the experiment. Each wrote a message to the other as agreed upon and awaited a reply.

Three messages by her to me were received nearly as she sent them—not exactly worded as would have been the case in telepathy, but with some changes or additions, and my hand wrote them without any assistance from the brain or will. She received but one of my messages, the surroundings being very uncongenial to her. The writing I get is not messages from personal friends usually, but from persons distinguished while living for intellectual development—many who have been well-known to the world. I was far more ready to accept the spirit theory at first than I am now, so many perplexing questions arising in my mind regarding it. I recently attempted to obtain psychometric impressions—what I understood to be the reading of the physi-

cal associations of an object held in the hand of a sensitive, What was my surprise to find that no physical impression came, but the hand dropped the article and began to write, giving names of people in some way connected with the object in question. The trouble with these experiments lies in the difficulty of searching out the facts in the case. When I receive a letter the magnetism is often so strong about it that it gives me a shock to touch it. Then my hand tries to write, the message being invariably from some dead relative or friend of the writer, so far as I have been able to inquire.

The absurd prejudice against these investigations prevents one from ferreting out each interesting case. If it is a spirit who gives me the message, it must come the instant I touch the object received from their loving friends, or else spirits must be able to be in more than one place at a time. At times I feel inclined to say it is all hallucination on my part, but when I read the articles from yourself, Mr. Underwood, Mr. Savage, and others who are known to be mentally sound, I feel comforted and encouraged to go on with my investigations."

I give this judiciously-written recital, from a private letter, in evidence that spiritual manifestations come often to those who do not at once rush to conclusions regarding their source; who investigate them in a judicial mood of mind, and who are anxious only to arrive at the truth. I have learned, too, from the recitals of others, that often some form of manifestation of intelligence,

outside of the persons who are chosen as the mediums of such intelligence, comes to those who are unfamiliar with Spiritualism, who have not solicited or been expectant of anything of the sort occurring, and who are often frightened at its exhibition in themselves which awakens doubt as to their own sanity. At the close of my address before the Psychical Congress, among those who came to me was a refined, sweet-voiced lady whose first words were :

"Oh ! Mrs. Underwood ! you don't know what a relief to my mind your confession of your psychical experience has proved ; for during the past year, away from home in a lonely place, I have been undergoing a like experience, against my will, however, and I was truly afraid I was losing my sanity by reason of the strange things written through my hand, and afraid to tell any one about it for fear they would make up their minds I was insane and treat me accordingly. Now—I shall feel better about it." And such has been the confession of a number of people to me.

The following gives the experience—or a portion of it—of a gentleman who, though a stranger to Spiritualism, having lost a beloved wife by death, in his sore grief was led to consult a medium who was a stranger to him, as he was at that time temporarily visiting Boston, from a suburban town some twenty miles away. The medium without help from him told him some particulars in regard to his wife and then to his surprise said : "She wants you to promise that you will sit at a table with a pencil and paper, and she will come and write."

The gentleman goes on to say :

I will say that I had never before even heard of automatic writing, and I wondered if she was to come in material form, but the medium explained that to me, and I promised. After three evening trials of eighty minutes duration each, my hand moved and a message in my wife's hand-writing was given me. The writing was exactly like hers, I was astounded and could but believe. Since that time a great mass of matter has come in this way of the nature you describe in your article in the *Arena*, but so far nothing that is capable of proof, that is, nothing hitherto unknown to me except the spiritual matters, which of course are unknown to all of us for a certainty. I have never so far, got any message from a spirit to mortal which has proved a bona-fide message, although I have many which I have never submitted to the ones to whom they were sent, dreading ridicule, etc. All kinds of hand-writing come—some very plain, and some not easily read, and much on earthly matters which has proved untrue in regard to other manifestations.

I am shaken at times both hands and body. I also hold a coin in my hand and get answers to mental questions of other persons by raps; tables also tip for me, but these are simply matters of development, and I believe may be increased at will by practice though I see nothing to be gained by such manifestations. I also find nothing is to be gained by attending circles; that you and I when once on the road may procure as much information through our own organizations as is possible for any medium, or circle of mediums to impart to us.

One thing I *dread*—the ridicule which so many otherwise sensible and intelligent persons will continue to throw upon one who simply admits a belief in matters pertaining to Spiritualism. The

thinly veiled pity and contempt with which they say he or she *pretends* to get communications from *spirits*. I have noticed this so much when trying to get a few intelligent persons in my own town to investigate with me.

This gentleman sent me a number of specimens of the different hand-writings and various drawings obtained by him in this way. Some of the drawings thus done through his hand, while very elaborate and symmetrical in design are like nothing I have ever seen, and under one or two of these the intelligence from which they emanated had written "picture of things belonging to spirit spheres."

Drawing, by those who have had no previous artistic taste or education, is a frequent manifestation of spirit power, but one which I personally have not been able to obtain, and I have seen a number of drawings by private individuals thus gifted which, while beautiful and symmetrical, yet bore no resemblance to anything I had ever seen, or anything known to the automatic artist. These too are probably of things unknown to our sphere.

I will give here a short extract from a letter of a lady residing in St. Louis, Mo., whose psychic experiences though not publicly known, have been of a widely varied character including automatic drawing and painting of strange flowers, etc., said to be indigenous to other planets than ours; long descriptions of which have been automatically written, while the one whose hand drew and painted those symmetrical though unique pictures had never been taught the first rudiments of drawing, having no personal inclination in that direction

until all of a sudden at an age when she was already a staid grandmother, she was taken in hand by an unseen artist who signs his name in the odd sort of characters which were first made known to me through my own automatic writing and which I call "spiral writing."

In one of her first letters to me she says :

That your "Psychic Experience" when it appeared interested me greatly, goes without saying —the more so, since your experiences and my own have been up to a certain point, so nearly analogous. Indeed one or two of the few friends whom I have taken into confidence in the matter, felt quite sure that I had written the *Arena* article under the nom-de-plume of Sara A. Underwood—in spite of my assertions to the contrary. Some of your experiences give me a sense of amusement, for they brought back to memory some exploits of the folk from the other side when first I found myself in communication with them. You see I was quite unacquainted with the various phenomena of Spiritualism, and did not dare mention to any one my queer experiences, After awhile the course of events of a spiritual kind became gradually settled so to speak, and truly for nine years (with the exception of two years when I was too ill to be controlled) I have been in a kind of university, learning the things I had long desired to know, receiving instruction in ethics and thought, on higher than earthly planes. Always I am taught the laws of love and truth and reverently do I thank my loving though unseen friends for having led me into a realm of light and peace which otherwise I think I should not have even dreamed of.

With this friend's conclusions as to the intellectual and joy-giving value of the lessons given

through automatic writing I entirely and heartily agree.

I give some further extracts from others to emphasize this truth.

A gentleman who had been converted from doubt as to any future existence through the agency of his dear wife's automatic writing, after she herself was called upon to enter the happier spheres, writes, "I appreciate your sympathetic regard in my unavoidable loneliness. I wanted you and Mr. U. to share with me the beautiful thoughts which came through my dear one's hand and I have sent you some of the best and some of the poorest communications, as well as some of the little rhymes which would come to her at times, for I wish you to know the different phases of her mediumship. In her normal condition she had no faculty for rhyming. I do, as you suppose, get a great deal of satisfaction out of the writings she left, and I am not sorry that I encouraged her to sit, and believed implicitly in her gift, so thus got much more through her hand than if I had not given her this encouragement. She refers to this in the communication from her given through Mrs. S. My dearest was the impersonification of affection. We lived twenty-five years together—and so happily! I do not, however, mourn as others mourn. You can well understand why.

A member of an orthodox church says:

My family and some of my orthodox friends are very much opposed to any expression of my experience, so for their sakes I would not wish to identify myself publicly with Spiritualism. But while I do not wish to displease or antagonize any of these so dear to me I could no more go back to the old orthodox ideas than—well, it would be like one returning to "wallowing in the mire" after

initiation into the beauty of cleanliness. My experience has created a new world for me. Yet I do not call myself a Spiritualist, although your higher ideas of Spiritualism commend themselves to me.

The following is from a well-known literary worker in other than spiritual journals:

How I would like to talk with you about some of the prophecies which have come to me unsought —unbelieved, yet true. Seldom concerning myself; yet when they do come they are remarkable. How far they are the uprushing of the eternal fountain of Spirit—the Over Soul—or how far they are pictures thrown upon our ideality by the discarnated, I have no means of clearly ascertaining. I only seek the truth in this direction and wish to have nothing which needs, or seems to need bolstering up in any fashion. Could I tell you the strange happenings and leadings of my wonderful life; perhaps your guides might help unravel them in the interests of Psychology—which I find myself unable to do. Ah! the ocean of truth is vast indeed—and how small are the bays we explore! Well, we have a long time before us in which to learn. * * * *

And now in regard to what D—— has guessed as to my "prayerfulness." It is a fact that never when I am alone and in harmony with Nature or engrossed by care, that I do not find myself unconsciously talking aloud in aspiration toward the infinite mind in which our own lives "move and have their being," "Flow into me, and through me, Spirit of Love and Wisdom! Give me strength and sweetness! Enlighten, uplift, round out the angles, and help me above all to be helpful to others, however hard it may seem. Let me be subject to just those experiences that will assist in developing me harmoniously and usefully." No

one living in mortal form knows or could guess of the hours I have walked alone in the woods and by the ocean with these "uplifts of heart and will" vocalized.

A New York lady writes:

I have become intensely interested in your wonderful automatic writing as published in the *Arena*. Some three years ago three friends and myself in the quiet of our own homes succeeded in establishing a line of communication between ourselves and the unseen friends by means of independent voices. The messages given were in thought and expression so much like your own. I noticed in some you gave us the idea that the spirit who had a belief in immortality found it of great advantage after passing out of the body. That idea was given again and again to us by different friends and neighbors who had passed over. I wish I were at liberty to write out our experiences for publication, but the dear friend who proves to be our best sensitive under the efforts of our unseen operators during our experiments objects to the least publicity; consequently I can only say that I know our friends live after the change called death, and can most surely communicate with us under the right conditions.

Later, the same correspondent writes:

I was sorry that Mrs. L. was not able to see you alone on her recent visit to your city. This prevented her from being as confidential as she wished, for these psychical experiences of ours having been kept secret among the few of us who made the experiments for our own satisfaction, we have never cared to make the results public on account of the prejudices of our orthodox friends. Mrs. L., however, is the one member of the little home circle who knows the least of the work from

actual observation, because she was in a deep sleep or trance during most of the manifestations. I would so like to write you a description of those three or four happy years of investigation, but to do so would fill many large sheets of manuscript. I always wrote down—sometimes during the sittings, every word as they were uttered—and I keep these records now as my most treasured possessions.

I hope sometime you may see these, but at present Mrs. L. objects on account of her own sensitiveness on the subject. That the voices we heard at various times were actually independent, we know to be a fact, because two or three times when Mrs. L. was in her normal state we were allowed to sit about a small table and many sentences were spoken, the sound seeming to come from some place near the ceiling of the room. The time I hope is coming when all necessity for keeping such manifestations a secret will be overcome by the world's recognition of the truth of the spirit's continued existence. A truth which though nominally accepted as part of all religious belief is yet resented as untruth when presented as a practical demonstrated fact through the phenomena of Spiritualism.

A lady who has had personal spiritual experiences writes from Oregon:

I am by no means through with my unique experiences but have proven enough to just say how wonderful or "what God hath wrought!" how vast the great unknown, and how little we know. My maladies are disappearing and I am slowly gaining. Every line of time seems to have left my face as my friends often remark—and this at 50 years of age. With this renovating power on me I do not by any means feel like being laid upon the shelf, in spite of my years. I do believe the

best part of my life lies ahead of me. Some day I will give you the benefit of my experiences in my search for truth. More wonderful it seems than golden fancy or beautiful dreams! Yet, oh so sad, some of it. But I feel that we are all in the sweep of the infinite law of life and love that is bringing all things to perfection. "I stand amid the eternal ways." I am mystified but feel as my guide so often says to me to "be good, be true, be firm," is my only royal path to happiness.

This correspondent is not the only one who under psychic or spiritual influence has experienced the "renovating power" which sometimes makes those whose features, formerly wasted by ill health or the ravages of years, resume the look of youth. The writer recalls five others who, when congratulated on their improved appearance, have ascribed it to the same cause. This is only mentioned incidentally as a matter for investigation and thought.

Another claims from the same source to have been given this "renovating power" to help others. She writes:

My healing powers do not seem to diminish and there is scarcely a day of my life that I am not called upon to use them. I am working on a case of ten or twelve years standing which the doctors here have given up. After three treatments the lady could sleep quietly, free from the frightful suffering which had caused her to cry aloud from pain nearly every night. There is mixed up with this power many apparently very unreasonable things, yet the benefit takes place despite the skepticism of people—but I refrain, I am too liable to imagine these strange things of interest to others because they mean so much to me.

The above, remember, is from the private letter of a personal acquaintance, as a mere statement of her own experience, and can only be what she supposes the truth, I think, for she is a sensible, level-headed business woman whose evidence I could readily accept upon any other matter.

A refined and lovely woman, who has for years given lectures through spirit impression, declares in a private letter that in her communion with the spirit world she finds:

Why, everything that we require as a stimulus and inspiration to all beautiful endeavor, and all patient waiting. Ah, the waiting! Perhaps you do not know yet what that means, but to me whose larger circle of nearest and dearest friends is among the countless group of deathless affections on the "other shore" that is a part of life's hardships. And what comes to me through my psychic perception is of the most needed and precious character, in that it gives help and comfort and strength, and a cheerful sense of at-oneness with God and his good purposes.

I give the above beautiful expression of assuredness of the continuity of life and of communion and kinship with spiritual spheres, as a sufficient answer to the many skeptics who ask, as a writer in the *Arena* did not long since, "Supposing it is true that spirits exist and can communicate with mortals, what good is there in knowing that fact?" The knowledge of these facts, and it is really knowledge to many beside this friend who has done much to spread her faith, is thus seen sufficient to irradiate even the saddest life on earth, for the present life is so short, even at its most extended

term as seen from a backward look, that the "waiting" will soon be over.

A dear poet-friend, who has since passed beyond the veil, wrote me soon after the publication of my experience in automatic writing in the same spirit of joyful knowledge:

I have always had perfect confidence in the dear friendship of yourself and husband, and shall have if no other word ever comes to me.....I have always wanted to write you since you "found the Saviour." What a good expression, if we only use it sensibly, and not exactly biblically! My heart went out to welcome you into the fold of those who have added knowledge to their possessions—and you and B. F. were never antagonistic to that useful gain—but I wanted to say so much, that I held back until I could feel able to do so—and that time did not come. I am so very happy that you have the proof in your own hands that if a man die 'he shall live again.' Your happy experience with the spirit friends is the same as mine has been—certainly their individualities are just as strongly defined as are those in the flesh. I wish I could see you and talk over these things. I am almost afraid the leisure time of which you speak, will only come to us after we have put off the shell and live but in the spirit. But to us that is only the continuation of this life and good to look forward to—it will come sometime. How good to have this expectation, and to know that life is eternal, and that there we will take no note of time, as we are forced to here!.... Come to us when you can, either in spirit—or letter—or person.

A lady whose always up-lifting verse is well-known over her own signature in Chicago journals, writes me:

The answers to questions that come to you are in direct line with the communications we have received for many years. Through them all there runs the one ruling spirit that makes for betterment—that lifts us up from the gross materialism of physical satiety, and gives us the real soul food of knowledge. Dear friend, do you know that I believe we may, some of us, live to see what we now call the "ideal" accepted as the entity—the "substance" of all things? Sometimes it seems to me in moments of exaltation that I can actually demonstrate the tangibility of virtues—that as we are accustomed to handle and measure material objects, so we may with a developed perception, grasp the reality of goodness and love.

IN THE HOUR OF DEATH AND AFTER.

Apropos of my own experience at the bedside of a dying friend mentioned in "Psychic Experiences," various like accounts have been since given me by others; and I will here give place to a few of such.

Mrs. Hester M. Poole, a well known literary worker in various fields, sent the following account not long since, to the paper edited by Mr. U. and myself.

A few months ago, Mrs. S., who had lately laid in the grave the form of her loved husband, came north on a visit. While here she related to me the following story of the passing away of Mr. S. As I questioned her in regard to the minutest particulars and heard them reiterated, I shall take the liberty of giving them, as near as possible, in her own language. She said:

During many years we had talked much about death and the other life and I see now that my dear husband was gradually preparing me for the separation that he saw was inevitable. His faith

was strong in the entire naturalness of the spirit life, and that we should know and love those with whom we are, while here, attracted by innate sympathy.

I too, hoped that. But I wondered how we should know one another! "Has the spirit form and shape?" I asked. Remember that we lived in a slow, conservative community where such things were not the subject of conversation.

Our friends are just the same that they are here, he would say, only more ethereal, more glorified. I have never seen my loved ones, but I have felt them, have had a sense of their interest and affection. I am certain they have the human form and that they try to make me see them. However, I do see them with my mind's eye. And I hope you and I will sometime be able to consciously discern their presence.

He spoke with entire faith but I was still at sea regarding the condition of the spirit. These talks and speculations continued until along in April. One damp day Mr. S. had an increase of asthma, so that, as usual at such times, I put on a wrapper, administered herbal medicine, and kept him companionship through the long hours of the night. Some time after midnight he grew easier and propped up by pillows, fell into a profound slumber. Not wishing to disturb his rest by any movement, I sat by the shaded lamp in a corner of the room where I could watch every motion and read until daylight,

The gray dawn passed and the sun was about to rise. Still he slept, peaceful as a babe. I extinguished the lamp and on tiptoe crept from the room to confer with our cook. A visitor in the household needed his morning coffee before starting early on horseback and I desired to see that everything was properly served. In a few moments I

returned to find that my husband had slipped from the supporting pillows and lay flat upon the bed.

This was strange, because he had long slept in a sitting posture. I went to rouse him—and found he had ceased to breathe. I felt his pulse, his heart—there was no sign of life.

You will think it strange, perhaps, that my first and only feeling was poignant sorrow that he should have gone without one farewell word or kiss. At the time it did not occur that he could not do it if he so desired. In my first burst of sorrow I cried aloud: "Oh James! how could you leave me without one little good-bye, even one?"

With these words, but without a tear or fright or any other sensation than that I should have had had he been about to start on a journey without a farewell, I turned and walked across the room. You see my mind had not entirely grasped the fact that he was what we call dead. He had merely left me without our usual leave-taking.

And now came the wonder of it all! As I turned at the farther extremity of the room and looked back at the beloved form lying motionless, I saw—what do you think? Above the pallid face and head, lying stark and motionless, I plainly saw another—radiant, soulful—the husband of my youth, only sparkling, beautiful, glorified. It was not more than fifteen inches above the lifeless head, and seemed to melt into it at or slightly below the neck, so that I saw no body attached to it. Transfixed with astonishment as I was, my coolness never deserted me. "Am I subject to an illusion?" I asked myself, "Do I imagine this? It is all-important that I should know the truth."

Accordingly I walked to the window, threw it open and looked out. Again I turned toward the bed. Again I saw that dear radiant face looking at me with utter calmness, yet with intelligence

and a satisfaction that seemed to rise to a kind of holy joy.

Will you believe that still I questioned myself, felt my own pulse, approached the inanimate form and spent several moments in proving to my consciousness that I was not a victim of hallucination? In moving from point to point, the eyes followed me and still I read in the face that I know and loved so well: "You see how it is! Death does not affect our consciousness. I am still your husband."

Finally, utterly satisfied, there swept over me a wave of gratitude, of spiritual elevation, of peace in the perfect certainty that I saw the soul of my precious one, and at the supreme moment he had been able to satisfy my doubts. Acting on this I said: "James, dear, I see you. I know you! You are here! You have not left me without a farewell. There is no death! Bless you, and bless you! You will wait until I go to you."

I spoke these words aloud and knew by the tenderness of the etherealized face that he understood. It gradually faded, while I recalled the external aspects of the case and left the room to inform the household. As soon as possible I returned to find only the poor body remaining in sight.

All through the funeral exercises I was as one who manifests none of the grief a friend usually feels at the laying away of the body. I told no one of my beautiful experience. But I knew then, as I know now, that the form in which my husband dwelt was no more to him or me than the clothing he wore the previous day. My loved one still lives.

After relating the above, Mrs. Poole says, in conclusion:

In this remarkable and delightful experience, which to me seems as real as any other fact in

nature, there are reasons why Mr. S. could so manifest himself While he was attenuated in body, and from temperament, development and aspiration, living more in the spiritual world than in that of the senses, he was the victim of no racking and infeebling disease. It was simply a dropping off of the worn body. There were no opiates used, no agony and apprehension around his couch. Alone with his wife, who was likewise peaceful and without apprehension, what more natural than that the great change should be so easily accomplished? What, too, more natural than, before turning his attention to the new scenes and higher conditions of that life for which he was so well prepared, he should make one triumphant effort to have Mrs. S. recognize his presence?"

The subjoined is taken from the private letter of a friend of earlier years whose father and all concerned were well known to me, and the room spoken of is a familiar one. Though not known as a Spiritualist I had yet heard the father declare his belief in spirit return long before his transition, and at a time when I had no belief in that possibility, but before the receipt of the letter from which I quote, I had no reason to guess that any of the living members of the family—all of whom were present at the occurrence spoken of—had any belief or experience in Spiritualism, so for me the extract held a deep interest. My friend writes:

I think I have had an experience equal to some of those I have seen published, and I will tell you about it. It was soon after father died, I think the first time Wesley [her only brother] came home

after that event. It was in the forenoon and we were in mother's sitting room ; she was sitting one side of the stove, Wesley the other side, while I sat directly in front. Wesley sat near the bedroom door, when it opened and father came in. I saw him, and I said to myself, "There, Wesley has got pa's chair !" It was so real that for the moment I forgot he was dead, and never thought but that it really was him. He came around Wesley and stood near me when I turned my head to look for the chair ; he looked very smiling and happy. When I looked for him again he was gone. I said, "Mother, pa just came into the room and stood between Wesley and me!" She said she did not doubt it at all. Sara, it was just as real as life !

He told me on his deathbed that he would be near me to help me all he could, and I know that somebody is helping me for I am impressed to do things and whatever I am thus impressed to do turns out to be just the right thing even if I don't think so at the time.

Before mother passed away when she was so helpless, often when I was busy in another part of the house I would suddenly have an impression that I must at once go to her, and I always found that she wanted me at that time; and I got so I never disobeyed the impression.

Now the writer of the above incident is no hysterical or imaginative person, but a very sensible, level-headed woman of mature years, who was, however, a faithful and devoted daughter to both parents who appreciated her love and service. That the presence of the son and brother made possible the right "conditions" for the father's manifestation of himself to his beloved daughter, seems to me very probable.

A Unitarian friend, a literary woman, writes:

Apropos of what you relate in your own "psychic experiences" in regard to seeing a spirit face above that of a dying friend, is the following told me by a lady who had previously no religious faith whatever: When watching by the bedside of a dearly loved baby neice she said to herself. "Now if there is a soul, if there be a God—let me as this dear life departs, see it go?" The little one gave a struggle, it seemed dead, no breath was perceptible—but, as she gazed awe-stilled, a grey mist emanated from around the baby's head which rose and gradually resolved itself into the child's similitude, but smaller, and floated off toward the ceiling where it vanished. "Believe me, or not," said she, "it makes no difference to me, but I now know that I have seen a soul!" I feel with you Mrs. U. that the old lines of belief are breaking down—to be merely liberal, scientific, or agnostic is not enough. The psychical, seen through the lens of science and reason, is surely needed.

As added confirmation of what this correspondent mentions in regard to "seeing a soul" I have always regretted that I have never been able to identify the woman physician whom I overheard relate a similar story a few years ago. It was at a suffrage gathering held at "Rose Cottage," Edgewater, Ill., the home of Rosa Miller Avery. Several small refreshment tables were scattered through the dining, sitting, and "Rose" rooms, each table accommodating six or more. Psychical mysteries had somehow become the topic at the table adjoining the one at which I was seated, but as I was personally unacquainted with those who were at the table, I could only listen with interest to the stories told there.

A strong-faced, sensible looking woman whom I heard addressed as "Doctor" presently took up the ball of conversation, arresting my attention by her opening words; "Well—I know its the fashion to disbelieve in continued existence, but, ladies—nevertheless I have seen a disembodied spirit at the moment of death!" Doubting and questioning eyes being hereupon turned toward her, she went on with assurance;

There was brought to my sanitarium for treatment some time ago a man who was a stranger to me, and so far gone in disease that I had no hope of curing him from the first. He lingered a day or two and then died while I stood close by his bedside, worried mainly by my inability to help him.

As I saw the breath depart and stood thinking about sending word to his people, I was all at once conscious of a presence by my side, and looking up I was thunderstruck to see the dead man's counterpart standing close by me, but apparently oblivous to my presence. He was looking down at the body with the most worried, mystified and wondering expression on his face. I too turned to glance at the stiff expressionless face of the corpse, and when I turned again to look the spirit was gone. But I knew then that I had seen the soul of a man!

A little silence fell upon the group at her table. Then one spoke up in a scornful way—"I suppose you are a Spiritualist—are you not?"

Her reply came clear as a bell:

No—I am no Spiritualist—I was at that time, and am to-day a member of the Episcopalian Church in good and regular standing. But life has had new meanings to me since that hour.

I will close this chapter with one more instance of such "soul-seeing" which I take from the private letter of a psychic friend who was present at the funeral services at Rose Cottage, a year or two later, of its mistress, Mrs. Rosa Miller Avery—the intimate friend of the narrator and myself, premising first that Mrs. Avery was one of the choice spirits who from childhood had been familiar with the Spirit-world, and before her transition had told her son and husband that if she could return she would manifest either through this friend or Sara A. Underwood. Until *after* this experience the friend from whose letter I quote did not know of this fact. This mutual friend, Mrs. D., soon after the funeral wrote to me as follows:

I will try to write you a brief account of my experience, at Rose Cottage on the 12th of November, 1894.

It so chanced that I was seated, when the services began, in the back parlor just in front of the mantel, which faces, if you remember, the little alcove, where Rosa wrote. This room was her abiding place—the "home-nest" for her.

The clergyman stood just in front of the alcove. Shortly after he began to speak, I was conscious of a mist rising just at the entrance of the alcove—his words, became to me, more and more indistinct, as the mist took shape, and form—when lo! before my eyes stood our friend, issuing from the alcove. I saw her dress, even to details—it was a lovely robe—rose-colored with a surplice waist, folding over to the left side, at which point, long ribbons fell. It was not till afterward, that I recognized the significance of the color, which illustrated her love, so marked for roses, while in the body. She

passed in and out amongst the people assembled there, as if at a reception, and finally came and stood before me, uttering in most emphatic tones these words: "E. D., I am risen."

I was somewhat surprised afterward to learn, that, when, before Mrs. Avery died she was asked if she would manifest herself, when out of the body. Her reply was, "I will come to either Sara Underwood or E. D., for they are my true friends.

She has come to me in various ways, since then. At one time, I was running over some chords on the piano—when suddenly Mrs. A. stood behind me—saying, "O, the inexpressible freedom of being able to go, where and when one chooses." But I have omitted in my descriptions of Rosa's coming on the 12th of November, one of the important points. She was no longer large and portly—only well-proportioned, and young in figure, as in face.

On our way to Graceland, Mrs M.D., and a Mrs. R., were in the carriage with me. Mrs. R. was Mrs. Avery's friend, when they were girls. She voluntarily said to me, knowing nothing of my vision, "Mrs. Avery and I used to wear each other's dresses when we were girls, and, I was much smaller than I am now." Mrs. R. is probably about my size. This establishes to me the youth that returns to us when the body is laid aside. I knew nothing of Mrs. Avery's form in earlier life—but so vivid was she in this vision, that in my thoughts of her now, I never associate her with the large body she wore on earth.

I could supplement the statements given here with a large number which have been related to me in personal conversation by those who have had similar spiritual experiences, which are by no means so rare as so many seem to think. The strangeness to me, since I have had my own eyes

opened, is that so many persist in regarding spiritual experiences as uncommon, or the result of imagination on the part of the recipients—but think the cases given sufficient.

The many shameful frauds perpetrated by conscienceless pretenders who pose in their role of public mediums, as representatives of Spiritualism, are doubtless among the leading causes of lack of popular belief in the truth of spirit-communication. For every time discovery—sure to come eventually—is made of such frauds, it causes even the faith of those who have had real experiences to be shocked, and their enthusiasm is chilled to uncertainty.

CHAPTER XX.

DOES DEATH END EVOLUTION?

Thus far science has been unable to show where evolution first started; still less may it affirm when it shall stop. There is yet no point where it can be said that nature has issued the fiat, "Thus far and no farther goes development." The materialistic theory which accepts nothing which is not within the scope of our confessedly limited sense perceptions, declares that the change which we name death, is the limit of the evolution of the individual consciousness in man; for purely physical science, seeking for the soul by post-mortem methods of dissection of our physical organism, can find no organ seemingly specially adapted as an enduring basis for psychic element in man.

But ever since man recognized himself as a conscious being, ever since he instinctively felt rather than reasoned "I think, therefore I am," and knew he could also think of himself objectively, the hope, the ever present sense of his own enduring existence, has been intuitive in all the races of mankind, and has been the basis of religions however widely diverging in other respects.

But this intuition of permanence of being has never been formulated as most of our knowledge is, on well-grounded scientific tests. It has rested mainly on the inward sense of man, on disputed

and unverified personal revelations, and such reasoning as Addison puts into the mouth of the Roman Senator Cato when contemplating suicide and preparing himself for the act, by reading Plato:

> It must be so—Plato, thou reasonest well—
> Else whence this pleasing hope, this fond desire,
> This longing after immortality?
> Or whence this secret dread and inward horror
> Of falling into naught? Why shrinks the soul
> Back on herself, and startles at distruction?
> 'Tis the Divinity that stirs within us:
> 'Tis Heaven itself that points out an hereafter,
> And intimates eternity to man.

The more recent discoveries and conceptions of our own age, an age which has made vast strides in physical science, have been marked by an ominous silence in regard to the soul of man, though that science has brought out in strong light the processes tending to the moral and intellectual development of the human mind and character. This silence has been markedly instrumental in undermining among men of education the belief in the continuity of man's individual existence beyond his earthly span of life, and disbelief in a future has within the past half century been rapidly gaining ground from lack of any apparent basis in science upon which such belief could reasonably rest.

In the meantime and almost co-existent with the growth of this disbelief there has been a growing accumulation of phenomena called spiritualistic—which, however, has been generally either unnoted or condemned by scientific men—going to show the dominance of a class of facts all purporting to

be supermundane in character, though differing in method of manifestation, the results of which seem to inspire those who are in touch with any of the different forms of these manifestations with a deep and vivid faith in the continuity of life beyond the visible world in which they find themselves, and to establish within them a firm belief in immortality.

But physical scientists having their scales, measures, working hypotheses and theories adjusted only to physical possibilities could not—except in the case of a few broad and liberal minds such as Crookes and Wallace—accept phenomena which defied and upset their scales and measures, and so pooh-poohed all these facts into the limbo of "hallucinations," "phantasms," and "hysteria." In spite of this indifference or condemnation on the part of science, the unseen intelligence of the universe—at least that part of it which could get in rapport with humanity—continued to call the attention of men by such methods as it could command in the way of telepathic, impressional, visual, oral and written communications.

Within the last decade however, science, represented by such careful researchers and thinkers as Professors Gurney, Sidgwick, Lodge, Myers, Podmore, Janet, Charcot, Liébault, Richet, Lombroso, and James (of Harvard University), has seen fit to make an attempt to bring the allied phenomena of hypnotism, hallucinations, sub-consciousness, crystal-vision, clairvoyance, clairaudience, telepathy, automatic writing, etc., within the domain of orderly science by careful record, sifting of evi-

dence and systemization of facts. So far as it has succeeded in this, there has been found nothing which makes impossible, much which makes it probable, that "death" is not the end of life or of evolution.

Let us consider for a moment what evolution, so far as we know it, implies. Always evolution proceeds upward from lower forms to higher; from the simple to the complex, from homogeneity to heterogeneity. At every step it takes on new and varied characteristics, as Goethe finely shows in his "Metamorphosis of Plants," which is intended to be also a psychic parable.

Closely observe how the plant, by little and little progressing
Step by step guideth on, change th to blossom and fruit!
First from the seed it unravels itself as soon as the silent
Fruit bearing womb of the earth kindly allows its escape,
And. to the charms of the light, the holy, the ever-in-motion,
Trusteth the delicate leaves, feebly beginning to shoot.
Simply slumbered the force in the seed; a germ of the future
Peacefully locked in itself 'neath the integument lay,
Leaf and root, and bud, still void of color and shapeless
Thus doth the kernel, while dry, cover that motionless life.

Herewith Goethe seeks to enforce the lesson that every step in progress bears the impress of all preceding steps, each one necessary to complete the evolution of the whole—the perfected result of development. Man has intuitively recognized himself as the crowning work of creative energy on this planet—the superior in intellect, morality, and self-consciousness of all other created things, so far as he knows—he also recognizes a higher

spiritual ideal of humanity than any one human being has ever been able to achieve. Some few, the prophets, poets, painters, seers, have come somewhat nearer than the masses of mankind to attaining this ideal, but no one can be said to have gained the standard of perfection recognized by all.

If then this stage of existence is the end of evolution in man as a conscious entity, man the product of the universe in which the aims and aspirations are the highest of all created things, who has been able to catch glimpses of still fairer and nobler spiritual ideals with no possibility of attaining those ideals—then is man the saddest travesty, the most wretched mockery of the possible, in the whole creation; no Tantalus evolved from poet's thought of the horrible, could have more dreadful existence and end—if all ends with our mortal life on this earth.

But since, in man's earthly development, evolution has ever worked in lines leading to his spiritual as well as physical evolution, does it not seem an almost imperative outcome that in some higher form this spiritual nature should continue to evolve still higher faculties and powers and in some measure fulfill the ideals of which we here have occasional gleams, but which are incapable of realization in our present environments? What poet, artist, musician, sculptor, inventor, or other worker in lines where idealization is possible, has ever realized in his work his highest dream?

It may be said,

Ah ! but these ideals are to exist in their fair

and beautiful fulfilment only for the generations of future ages—as in each succeeding one of the world new and improved species of races and animals are made possible by improved conditions.

But this prophecy is not satisfactory or convincing to the individual souls who feel within their own egoistic possibilities the attainment of far higher ideal evolution than is possible in the limitations of earth life. To wither and perish out of existence with all these promised possibilities unevolved except in the race, seems to thinking souls a horrible perversion of the law of evolution, and these look hopefully forward to the time when psychic phenomena, scientifically investigated and classified, shall have proved beyond power of doubt to all scientists and thinkers, and thence to longing souls generally, that so-called "death" does not end evolution.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE SPIRITUAL CONCEPTION OF GOD.

It seems to be a law of spiritual evolution that only so much of truth is revealed to each individual mind as that mind is capable of comprehending; so also with the general or public mind of each succeeding age, the acceptance of discovered laws in material or spiritual science is only in proportion to the progress of intellectual understanding among the people.

Thus the apparently simple questions which have ever occurred to the mind of man since he first recognized himself as a conscious thinking being, have not yet been answered satisfactorily, doubtless because not yet has thinking man attained to the point of intellectual development when the true answers to those necessarily appealing questions can be thoroughly understood by him. Spiritual revelation hints that not in this earth-life phase of being can these questions ever become fully comprehended—the questions as to the why, the whence, and the whither of our being, and that other correlative question as to the being and personality of God—the source of all phenomena.

Man in all stages of progress could not fail to recognize the manifestations of this Power outside of himself, and all religions have formulated theories in regard to this Power, endowed it with such

qualities as their own intellectual comprehension allowed, and have called it by such forceful names as have occurred to them—and the words Zeus, Jove, Jehovah, Allah, Brahma, God, mean one and the same—the power which moves the universe—that which Spencer calls "the Infinite and Eternal Energy."

Among all these varying yet akin ideas of creative Deity the popular conception of the God of Christianity is by no means the highest, though here and there some advanced spiritually poetic minds have caught glimpses of the possibilities involved in such All-Embracing power and woven into words, vague yet meaningful, the shadow of their dream of such a God. But the glory and wonder of which these souls have caught gleams have never been reflected in the popular creeds or conceptions of even those who deemed themselves in their own parlance "accepted of God."

For how could it be possible for those whose religion endowed this Supreme Being with sex, speech, passions—which permitted talk of his sons, his anger, his vengeance, of his "right hand;" which avowed that he had "made man in his own image," to conceive of such a God, so described, save as a personal anthropomorphic masculine individuality. If all Christians do not thus conceive, it is only because their own growing knowledge shows them the absurdity and puerility of such conception.

But the mass of Christians do thus conceive of the God they think they worship, and with many grown people the idea of God, which we once heard a little child give expression to, would not be far

from their own mature thought if put into definitely worded phrase. The little one sat by a window one day just after a severe thunder-storm, which her pious mother had assured her was the work of "the Good Man"—which name had been used to give the child her first ideas in regard to the Supreme Power. She sat for some time looking up with serious, earnest eyes to the sky where amid the breaking clouds, bits of blue showed here and there through the rifts. After a long silence thus gazing, she turned with a sweet, half-scared, half-pleased awe in her face to her mother, "Mamma," she exclaimed, "I fink, I is most sure, I did just see 'ee Good Man' looking down at me, from 'ee clouds—and he laughed at me, he did—just so," giving a gentle smile. When asked to describe him she said he "was a nice ole man, with white hair, and long white whiskers—like Mr. (naming a kindly looking gentleman of venerable appearance.) This, apparently, was the idea which her mamma's references to "the Good Man" had evoked in her childish mind; and which a vivid imagination with the help of shifting cloud-pictures, materialized to her baby eyes.

Spiritualism has not formulated definitions of the personality of God, or uttered dogmas concerning the attributes and qualities of the Universal Power which is sometimes referred to by discarnate intelligences as "the Grand Whole," "the Source of All Life," "the great All of Being, which you name God but which to our clearer yet bounded perceptions is still unnamed." To feel and understand that the Power and Intelligence able to plan

and carry on all things according to unerring law, so far as our weak perceptions can follow the workings of the universe—and to recognize however dimly that this power is in itself intellect, love, wisdom, harmony—should teach us its present unfathomableness to our limited knowledge. To say this, is not to depreciate or question man's right of inquiry or investigation, but only to inculcate patience, and to refrain from unverified conclusions in our search after the infinite.

But yet there are spiritual conceptions of this Power based on its universal development, and the great poets whom Emerson calls "liberating gods" as giving expression to humanity's highest if unexpressed ideals, have now and again put into word-form this spiritual concept, though always in terms of vague immensity, as when Goethe's Faust says :

Who dare name him ? and who avow "I believe in Him ?" Who feel—and dare to say "I believe in Him not?" The All-Embracer, the All-Sustainer, does he not embrace and sustain thee, me, himself? Does not the heaven arch itself there, above ?—lies not the earth firm here, below ?—and do not eternal stars rise kindly twinkling on eternal high? Call it what thou wilt—I have no name for it.

And Tennyson while he declares his lack of definite knowledge of

> That which we dare invoke to bless;
> Our dearest faith; our ghastliest doubt;
> He, They, One, All; within, without;
> The Power in darkness whom we guess;
>
> I found him not in world or sun
> Or eagle's wing, or insect's eye,
> Nor through the questions men may try
> The pretty cobwebs we have spun.

Yet later speaks undoubtfully of

> That God which ever lives and loves;
> One God, one law, one element;
> And one divine far-off event
> To which the whole creation moves.

The poet Edward Young, writing more than one hundred years ago, gave this truly spiritual conception of God:

> Say, by what name shall I presume to call
> Him, I see burning in these countless suns,
> As Moses in the bush? Illustrious Mind!
> The whole creation less, far less to Thee
> Than that to the creations ample round,
> How Shall I name Thee? How my laboring soul
> Heaves underneath the thought too big for birth!
> Great System of perfections! Mighty Cause
> Of causes mighty! Cause uncaused! Sole Root
> Of Nature, that luxuriant growth of God!
> First Father of effects! that progeny
> Of endless series; where the golden chain's
> Last link admits a period, who can tell?
>
> Father of Spirits! Nobler offspring! Sparks
> Of high paternal glory; rich endowed
> With various measures, and with various modes
> Of instinct, reason, intuition; beams
> More pale, or bright from day divine, to break
> The dark of matter organized, (the ware
> Of all created spirits) beams that rise
> Each over other in superior light,
> Till the last ripens into luster strong
> Of next approach to Godhead.

The great poets, Emerson intimates, are spiritually inspired. He says:

The poet is the person in whom these powers are in balance, the man without impediment, who sees and handles that which others dream of, traverses the whole scale of experience, and is representative of man, in virtue of being the largest power to receive and impart.

Again :

The poet knows that he speaks adequately then, only when he speaks somewhat wildly, or with the flower of the mind, not with the intellect used as an organ, but with the Intellect released from all service and suffered to take its direction from its celestial life; or as the ancients were wont to express it, not with intellect alone, but intellect inebriated with nectar. As the traveler who has lost his way, throws his reins on his horse's neck, and trusts to the instincts of the animal to find his road, so must we do with the divine animal who carries us through this world. For if in any manner we can stimulate this instinct, new passages are opened for us into nature, the mind flows into and through things hardest and highest, and the metamorphosis is possible.

Even from the earliest times the poets have proved the best interpreters of God—the soul of things—to man in his present stage of comparative ignorance. So we find in many of the poets the Supreme Power of the Universe touched upon in words of spiritual beauty and far-reaching meaning, but it must suffice now to give but one quotation more, and that from Dante's vision of God in Paradise:

I passed, as I remember, till my view
Hover'd the brink of dread infinitude.
O, grace! unenvying of thy boon! that gav'st
Boldness to fix so earnestly my ken
On th' everlasting splendor, that I looked
While sight was unconsum'd and in that depth
Saw in one volume clasp'd of love, whate'er
The Universe unfolds; all properties
Of substance and of accident, beheld
Compounded, yet one individual light
The whole. And of such bond methinks I saw
The universal form.

* * * * *

> Not that the semblance of the living light
> Was changed (that ever as at first remained)
> But that my vision quickening, in that sole
> Appearance, still new miracles descry'd
> And toiled me with the change.

Truly does this grand poet of the thirteenth century—who was said to have had strange spiritual experiences himself—depict in few words the possibilities of creative power, boundless intelligence, unquenchable love and wisdom, a true spiritual conception of God. Contrast Dante's Paradise with its progressive stages of purity, light and knowledge with the ideas of the masses of those called Christian believers even in enlightened to-day. Listen to the conversation regarding the "hereafter" among such believers on some occasion when death has visited their own or some other home. They speak as if they and the departed were on the most familiarly intimate terms with the Supreme Power which to them seems a personality to be placated, and conversed with, as with a superior but still human being. They feel sure that the one just gone is in God's immediate personal presence, and speculate as to what judgment will be passed on certain foibles or failings, and being themselves in the most kindly softened mood through sorrow, rehearse all the good points of their friend to each other, and conclude according to their own dim light that a favorable verdict will be given.

As if the great fountain of existence in which we live and move and love, had anything to forgive in the atoms of itself working according to immutable spiritual law toward stronger realization of their

own power and possibilities, through the processes of spiritual purification of which the strivings and trials of humanity are an ordained part!

And yet the vastness, the infinitude of it, or man's present inability to fully comprehend that Power Christians call God—which Emerson calls the "Over-Soul"—does not put us human beings who are parts of it, apart from or divorce us from it—and only our present limitations can make it appear so to us. As Emerson says: "Of this pure nature every man is at some time sensible. Language cannot paint it in his colors. It is too subtle. It is undefinable, unmeasurable, but we know that it pervades and contains us. We know that all spiritual being is in man.....There is no bar or wall in the soul where man, the effect, ceases, and God, the cause, begins. The walls are taken away. We lie open on one side to the deeps of spiritual nature, to all the attributes of God. Justice, we see and know, Love, Freedom, Power. These natures no man ever got above, but always they tower above us."

CHAPTER XXII.

THE FUTURE LIFE.

HEAVEN.

Since the first consciousness of individuality in man, as soon as there was conscious recognition by his reason of the difference between good and evil in conduct, the idea of reward for good conduct, acts and purposings, and of punishment for the evil ones, has taken shape and been formulated not only in regard to this world, but because experience has taught us that often our best intentioned efforts on this sphere "gang aft agley," there has been formulated in our religious theories a system of rewards and punishments for our good or evil acts, to be meted out in a future state, and we have named the state of rewards "Heaven"—of punishments "Hell."

In most religions these states are recognized and most truly believed in. These states are variously described according to the intellectual grasp of the people formulating theories in regard to them. Especially is this true regarding the sphere of reward for human souls after death—that is heaven.

Heaven takes on varying characteristics in accordance with the characteristics of the race or nation's religion; and in all faiths the general formula of which is accepted by its followers are

often found widely varying conceptions of what that formula may imply to individual believers born of difference in personal education or environments.

Take for instance the different ideas held today by truly orthodox believers in regard to the orthodox heaven. Fanny Kemble in her charming "Records of a Girlhood" says:

Lady E. said it was Lady Cork who had originated the idea that, after all, heaven would probably turn out very dull to her when she got there—sitting on damp clouds and singing "God save the King" being her idea of the principal amusements there. This rather dreary image of the joys of the blessed was combated however by Lady E. who put forth her own theory on the subject as more genial, saying: "Oh dear, no! She thought it would be all splendid fêtes, and delightful dinner parties and charming clever people; just like the London season, only a great deal pleasanter because there would be no bores.

The thinking mind cannot well help conjoining these utterances in regard to a future state of supposed happiness by such frivolously cultured people, with Pope's description of the ideas of the uncultured savage:

Lo, the poor Indian whose untutored mind
Sees God in clouds and hears him in the wind:
His soul, proud science never taught to stray
Far as the solar walk or milky way,
Yet simple nature to his hope has given
Behind the cloud-topped hill an humbler heaven.
* * * * * *
To be, contents his natural desire,
He asks no seraph wings, no seraph's fire,
But thinks admitted to that equal sky,
His faithful dog shall bear him company.

In all ideas regarding heaven, man's materiality

of view necessarily gives form and coloring, and blends with even the poetic, philosophical or esthetic conceptions of the heavenly state.

From the sensuous heaven of the Mohammedan where the society and embraces of beautiful houris will reward the faithful, and the Scandinavian heaven which was the gathering place of heroes where feasting and fighting were still to go on, to the philosophical conceptions of Plato's heaven, the home of the just who had led holy lives and purified themselves by the study and practice of philosophy—which might be situated above the air and wherein all beautiful things which gave pleasure on earth, such as flowers, fruit, seasons, precious stones, and especially sympathetic companionship should exist, but in far more delightful conditions than the earthly; or the rational Hindu conception of a continuation of life in progressive spheres, each successive one an improvement upon that preceding it, all are colored by man's sense limitations.

The essential idea of all theories regarding heaven is that of a state of happiness, and as man's happiness depends upon his advance in knowledge and his capacity for enjoyment, it necessarily follows that what might be heaven for one human soul would be hell to another. The savage whose happiness can best be found in the company of "his dog, his bottle, and his wife" would be sorely bored and wearied in the company of Plato, Socrates and their set, while the "happy hunting ground" of the Indian would possess no charms for these esthetic souls.

Among human individuals even of the same race, the ideal of happiness widely varies. The Jack Tar who having saved a wealthy man's life, was promised in return therefor, to have three wishes for what he most needed granted him, wished first for "all the 'bacca he could use," then "all the rum he wanted," then paused doubtfully as to the third and last wish, but being pressed to name it, said, "More 'bacca"—plenty of tobacco and rum being the sum of his desire.

Another form of this limitation of sense of happiness in stunted natures is most pathetically expressed in the anecdote recorded of an overworked farmer's wife, a believer in the doctrine of the resurrection of the body, who being at the point of death declared that "it would be just her luck to have the angel Gabriel blow his horn for the resurrection the morning after she was buried and before she had a chance to rest"; rest, which she had been so long denied being her ideal heaven.

So as our ideals grow in breadth of knowledge, love of beauty, comprehension of lovingness, the all-embracingness of Being, so will grow our own ideals of Heaven and the possibility of their attainment. The vision of heaven described by Dante which to that great intellect was clear, and spiritually comprehended in all its unutterable glory, falls on many ears as meaningless words, to others it opens glimpses of thought which cannot find utterance, but is only felt presciently as a lesson whose deeper meaning must be solemnly pondered over.

Thus the most rational view of man's possible

heaven is that presented through Spiritual teachings and revelations—that through a series of gradations the result of willing seeking for growth in knowledge of spiritual truth, and of acceptance in action of those truths, every ideal heaven may in turn be sought for and attained, until the heaven he may at last attain will be altogether beyond his present mortal comprehension—for "eye hath not seen nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man to conceive the things which God hath prepared" for him.

As a late singer says of her hope of heaven, it must be true that she is right in thinking as she does:

So I feel sure when we have crossed the border
And take on the new ethereal powers—
That we will be amazed at all the order
Exceeding the sublimest dreams of ours.
And we will surely see those much-loved faces
Dear and familiar in that meeting time,
Yet made more fair with new celestial graces
And radiant with an unfading prime.

THE HIGHER LIFE.

While the phenomena of Spiritualism, the intelligence shown by rappings, table tipping, clairvoyance, clairaudience, trance, automatic writing, inspirational speaking, etc., have been absolutely essential factors in leading to a belief in its teachings, yet their highest value is not merely in bringing us into momentary communication with those loved ones who have entered the beyond through the gate called death; nor in causing us to marvel at the wondrous thought-divining power which seems to be gained by reason of that change,

but rather in the glorious prospect which its teachings as given through these avenues of information, opens up to man of higher spiritual life.

It is a confused, discouraging, and unreasonable problem which orthodox religion offers to thinking man in its materialistic and final heaven and hell into which all the varying grades of saints and sinners are to be ushered on their departure from earth's sphere. To sensitive thinkers it was hard to determine which was the more dreary abode, the orthodox heaven with its perfunctory, unattractive joys, and the enforced companionship of millions of sinless, yet common-place souls, or the flaming terrors of unintermitting punishment which had revenge and not reform for its object, but shared with many bright and brilliant minds. To such thinkers the rational and reasonable scheme of spiritual evolution invariably asserted through every phase of professedly spiritual message—a scheme foreshadowed by earthly scientists in physical evolution—not only recommends itself for its apparent orderly sanity, but above all because it makes possible—nay almost imperative—the truth of the hope that "within this boundless universe is boundless better," attainable by man in his aspirations toward the higher life; nay more, that the higher life of spirit, is partially attainable by high thinking and clean living here and now.

No one, however, can grow spiritually who does not consciously, or in humility, unconsciously, constantly seek to widen his sphere of knowledge

and effort. To those for whom phenomena and spirit recognition are the be-all and end-all of Spiritualism, only phenomena and that not of the highest type will come. In Spiritualism more than any other religious faith is it true, that only to those who earnestly ask for it shall the truth be given, and only those who knock at the door of spirit for admittance in their search for the key to the higher life shall find the way open.

What is it then to live the higher life of spirit even while in the body? The supreme lesson of spirit teaching is, that individual man—a spark from the great source of All Being—is placed here in this temporary phase of material life in order to grow—to develop in knowledge of his possibilities and increase in all the higher spiritual attributes, through the struggles, trials, toils, temptations and triumphs which serve human souls in much the same way that sunshine, winds and rains serve the tender plant, giving strength, increasing its power of endurance and giving the necessary conditions of life and growth.

Recognizing that we are most surely spirits, though still imprisoned in sense-form, we can yet aspire to live the life of the soul in spite of sense limitations; can dare to be true to our highest ideals in the face of and in spite of conventionalities, the hope of material gain, worldly prosperity, coveted fame, or the approbation of our peers.

With a strong conviction of the transitoriness of this state of existence, and the knowledge that our passions, our griefs and joys are but the ephemera of a day—primary lessons in the school of spirit

lore—it cannot but be borne in upon those who long to gain "the Place of Peace" in spirit progress, that the shortest cut to the attainment of the satisfying higher life of the soul must be by way of self-control and altruistic self-effacement. So long as the "I" looms up in solitary dangerous isolation on our map of life—the one island toward which our bark must steer—so long are we in imminent danger of fatuous drifting o'er unknown seas, or shipwreck on some uncharted rock.

Ever and ever, so Spiritualism teaches, the ascent of spirit is as clearly shown as is man's evolution from lower forms in Darwin's "Descent of Man," and though correlated with that theory, is a thousand times more exhilerating and inspiring. Let us gain so far a height as was once undreamed of, there are before us still "Ossas on Pelions piled" of difficult yet delightful endeavor before us in spiritual progress and every upward step brings new joy gained in treasures of divine love and wisdom.

In view of this upward way in which sympathetic companionship of kindred spirits is promised, how comparatively easy should it be for those who are thus brought to recognize that they are of spirit origin while still bound by earth's ephemeral conditions, to strive ever to conquer the passions which tend to lower and debase, and grow in the direction of the qualities which make for righteousness; to grow in love toward all, seeing in even the meanest human soul, the germ of the divine, and to help fan in obtuse or disheartened souls the flame that aspires toward its true source.

In the light of spiritual progression, how low and needless seem the passions of anger, envy, malice and ostentation. In view of the ephemeral character of this transition state, how puerile seems the wild desire for earthly fame or recognition from our fellow-strugglers. How ridiculous our cravings for and pride in transitory possession of material things—how worse than foolish to deny the gladness and glow of sympathetic love to those from whose lives love seems eliminated, to fail to help and uplift our own souls through our efforts for others whom we know to have a common origin with ourselves and a like destination, though they may not yet have awakened to that truth. So may we come to that state of daily blessedness which Emerson thus describes:

> But over all his crowning grace,
> Wherefor thanks God his daily praise,
> Is the purging of his eye
> To see the people of the sky;
> From blue mount and headland dim
> Friendly hands stretch forth to him,
> Him they beckon, him advise
> Of heavenlier prosperities
> And a more excelling grace
> And a truer bosom glow
> Than the wine-fed feasters know.
> * * * * * *
> Teach him gladly to postpone
> Pleasures to another stage
> Beyond the scope of human age,
> Freely as task at eve undone
> Waits unblamed to-morrow's sun.

ONE WORLD AT A TIME.

Many of our friends who have not accepted the spiritualistic theory of the universe, while confessing that there may be continuity of existence in

other spheres, aver that they can see no good reason why any special preparation or thought should be given to the subject at this stage of being, since if there is a process of spiritual evolution it must be a purely natural one, and it is useless, nay, detrimental to success in this world to take thought in regard to the possibility of another while here. In short, that the wisest philosophy consists in living for "one world at a time."

The child who is placed in a primary school by his parents for the first time may be too ignorant as yet to have any very distinct idea as to the purpose of his wiser parents who have put him there, as the first step towards making him a good citizen and self-reliant man by laying the foundation of worldly education and larger knowledge, yet surely if he could be brought to understand the absolute need there is for such beginning of education, no one would think that such knowledge would be a detriment to his studies.

Is the student who enters upon a college course in straightened circumstances, but who is determined to win his way through, because he knows that upon his success in his studies depends all his future success in earning a good living, and the attainment of his ambitions, likely to be less devoted to his college work, than the aimless son of a millionaire who enters college because it is expected that rich men's sons should be graduates from such institutions? Does not reason teach and experience show that the constant thought of the necessity for such knowledge as can only be

gained through a collegiate course, will act as a spur to the poorer man, and he is far more likely to graduate with high honors than his wealthy classmate who has had no such incentive?

So why should not knowledge of the truth of progressive life beyond this earthly phase act as a spur to the best possible work while here to those who understand spiritual truths, and who know that deferment here means deferment of attainment in spheres beyond ? With the goal constantly in view will those who have entered upon the race be less liable to press on toward it? Indeed, no, the knowledge of whither we are bound and of the necessary educational part which earth-life bears toward that destination, will only make this life and its incidents and duties more intensely and joyously interesting than it possibly could be without that knowledge.

When we know that each event and act of our daily lives bear an irreversible relation to the upbuilding of the inner life upon which our future progress and happiness depend, such thought cannot fail to have its constant influence upon the way we meet events and the mode of action we take in regard to them. Everything will have to us a meaning and force of possibilities beyond the superficial present moment and its ephemeral pain or pleasure, and we shall gradually grow to shape our personal thoughts and acts toward their ultimate and grander meanings and outcome.

Indeed it is hardly possible from the true spiritualistic point of view to live only for one world at a time, for law is as supreme in this life as in any

future—only here we are constantly learning what those laws are, by trying to run counter to them, for such experiences teach us that only by the adjustment of our lives with law here can comparative comfort be achieved, so spiritual life must mean the harmonizing of one's life with the imminent law of the Universe both physical and psychic.

If by saying that one world at a time is sufficient to attend to, is meant that we may otherwise become less attached to the things of this, and less on guard against the evils which may come of the wrong-doing of others toward our selfish present good, it may be said that such guardedness seems not to have worked thus far for universal good, and certainly if all become actively selfish in work and motive, a pandemonium even worse than the present state of things would ensue. Emerson most truly observes—"If we will not be marplots with our miserable interferences, the work, the society, letters, arts, science, religion of men would go on far better than now, and the Heaven predicted from the beginning of the world, and still predicted from the bottom of the heart, would organize itself. as do now the rose, and the air and the sun."

CHAPTER XXIII.

SPIRITUAL POSSIBILITIES.

Let us consider for a little space what Spiritualism affirms as to man's being and progression, and strive to realize somewhat the possibilities open to every human being, supposing the spiritualistic hypothesis be the true one.

Discarding for the moment the many minor points on which the unseen communicants seem occasionally to differ, we will take a few of the fundamental ideas in which nearly all agree and which are accepted as the truth by Spiritualists generally, and see to what conclusions these basic principles will lead us.

These are, first that this earth-life is but one phase of man's spiritual existence, an evolutionary process necessary to teach him spiritual truths not otherwise attainable; that earthly trials, griefs, temptations, joys, affections, triumphs, etc., are serving as needful disciplinary lessons to enable him to understand and withstand temptations of the lower sort, and to realize the spiritual happiness which comes from obedience to the higher law.

Secondly, that so-called death is not the end of individual conscious being, but only a natural process of transition to another phase of existence, which again may be left for another upward step as the soul expands with wider knowledge and

stronger spiritual power, and that progress in knowledge and lovingness stretches far outside of our present limited imaginings.

Thirdly, that only in proportion to the assimilation of the individual character toward the highest spiritual good will be the soul's progress in the higher planes, and for this, individual effort and longing are absolutely necessary, that for individual sins there is no vicarious atonement nor any way of salvation until by growing love of the true and beautiful there comes more and more a state of at-one-ness with all truth and beauty of spiritual character.

For the moment let us accept without debate or doubting these premises, and note what the legitimate conclusions must be, what the logical outcome should be of such progressive spiritual life. It cost many long years of investigation, close observation, gathering and grouping of known facts, and testing of these by correlated theories to establish the truth of the law of evolution in the physical world, and the fact that it has there been found to be so unerring and universal, should teach us that in spiritual progress we need not expect through any magical change to spring into any sphere or condition of beauty, love, or knowledge, full-orbed with all the wisdom of that sphere without preparatory tendency and effort; that forever each separate attainment must be won by separate acts of will and endeavor. As man grows and expands in body and mind from babyhood to youth, and from youth to prime, so must his spiritual being which dominates the physical,

also gradually blossom out into full harmonious beauty.

It does not appear at all reasonable that we shall ever here on this planet, with sense perceptions which we ourselves recognize as very limited, come into full or precise knowledge of the range of possibilities which may open to us in other spheres, but enough has already been made known to us to allow us to dimly guess of the grand and glorious spiritual possibilities within the bounds of being, open to each human soul. Each one of us, however large or limited in any or all directions of knowledge gained, has yet had inspiring, almost tantalizing glimpses. tastes, foregleams at periods in our lives, of many longed-for things of which here we have never been able to gain full knowledge or possession.

Moments have come to even the lowest among us, of pleasure in musical sound, artistic beauty, or sympathetic lovingness, which aroused longings too vague to be put into words and dreams of some greater reality of which that moment gave but a hint. Who that has felt within the depths of his soul such a transitory waft of delight coming from some weird strain of music; while gazing on some lovely scene in nature; when experiencing the joy of helpfulness; the expression of love in friendship; the sense of satisfaction in achievment; but has felt also at the moment of highest pleasure coming to him through these, a dim sort of dissatisfaction at the transitoriness of it all, and a feeling that there are higher possibilities within him which are not yet filled or satisfied—but Spir-

itualism bids us keep heart of cheer in that these vague longings give hint of the joys which may be ours in other spheres.

With growth in any direction comes greater capacity for enjoyment. Soon as we begin to take delight in acquiring knowledge in any one branch of science, every item added to our store gives us renewed joy and pride. Think then, what it must be to realize that before us lies an inexhaustible supply of knowledge and wisdom in every direction now known to us, and in many ways yet undreamed of, which can be gained in spiritual spheres rapidly as the soul can assimilate it.

Every new friend we gain here sends a new thrill of happiness through our souls, and if we are many-sided in our sympathies, the area of our own knowledge grows by being shared with each new friend in touch with any one of our likings. Think then of the possibilities of spiritual friendships; every act of love shown us makes our lives wider, larger, and more beautiful; for as we are here assimilated intellectually with those of the same tastes and pursuits, our range of friendship widens with our intellectual capacity. The man or woman to whom botany, astronomy, geometry, geology, microscopy, journalism, music, "slumming," or anything else has become a passion, is a spiritual helper to all those outside of their area with whom they come in contact.

What joy then in higher spheres to meet friends and teachers in all departments of knowledge! In our present circumscribed sphere of sense-limitations we are confined to a very small range

of knowledge of states, powers, or realization of the interwoven outcome of our acts. In higher spheres may we not reasonably think it possible for us to have higher sense-perceptions and power of realizing possible results—the larger meaning of cause and effect—and be ourselves made keenly cognizant of power possible to us, such as we have weakly imagined the prerogative of what we named gods.

Surely the least of the possibilities promised by Spiritualism to those who ardently long to be of service to their fellows, is worth while living for—to grow in graciousness of thought and expression towards all, to gain the gift of infinite patience in things great and small by reason of larger knowledge—to keep in sympathetic lovingness with the spiritually wayward, warped, stunted, and even abnormally evil natures on earth.

Ah! what incentives to spiritual progression here and now are offered by Spiritualism. The possibility of achievement giving strength for steady effort, and faith to persevere unto the glorious end and aim.

AGE IN THE SPIRIT WORLD.

In disputing the question of man's continued existence after the dissolution of the body, one of the standard arguments against such continuity and consequent recognition of friends in the beyond, is based on the facts of age, and successive generations. Used as we are through our earthly experience to the different stages through which we pass here, childhood, youth, manhood and

womanhood, and the gradual decline of physical energy culminating in old age and death, it is natural for us to carry on the analogy into such future life as we can conceive of, and we think of the babe called away in life's first dawning hours, the prattling boy or girl, the youth or maiden, the venerable grandsire and worn-out grandmother as still retaining in the spirit-world the same physical aspects as the bodies in which their spirits were encased previous to the moment of their departure. Otherwise, the question is asked, how are we to recognize our own friends when we reach their state? Or, if spiritually progressed and changed, how can there be any joy in recognition? and indeed, will they, thus changed, be really the same ones whom we loved and lost, and mourned and longed for while we were in the body?

Every grandmother and great-grandmother who has passed from earth had herself a mother whom she longed to meet in the Spirit-world, and loved as she loved the daughters, sons and grand-children left behind. What confusion of identities, relations and ages, say the doubters, must then arise in such cases of spirit recognition, and reasoning from earthly premises they say spiritual life is improbable, if not impossible, and think they have brought forward a strong argument against it.

Let us consider the question a little. What are the means and methods by which we recognize our friends on earth? When we see them in our homes, meet them momentarily on the street, or

when they return after long absence, or we have been separated from them for longer or shorter periods while they were "growing up?" Primarily by their physical characteristics which our eyes detect rapidly, for spite of the general like characteristics common to humanity and the race, every individual has his marked physical variation from all others in form or features. Even when the child or youth has developed in size or expression, the personal characteristics still remain, so that recognition is unmistakable.

But deeper and more strongly asserted than physical stamps of individuality are the spiritual characteristics which set apart each individual soul, and it is by these we recognize one person from another somewhat similar one, more than by physical difference. A human being may by disease or accident become so changed in outward appearance as to be unrecognizable by his dearest friend, but if the mind remains the same, his spiritual characteristics would clearly reveal his identity to the least observant.

And is it not the intellectual and spiritual qualities, rather than the merely physical, which draw us to our loved ones and endear them to us? Is it not the spirit within the body that we love rather than the body itself? Is not the body beloved because of the quality of the spirit which inhabits it for a time. We admire the house in which a friend lives, and which bears evidence of his presence, pursuits, wealth and tastes; but if he moves from one abode to another, we recognize him through these signs as clearly in the new habitation as in

the old, and we transfer our liking quickly from the old home to the new, for our friend is still the same wherever he abides, and our love still follows and recognizes him, It is then the spirit of man which we care for.

But spirit should not in higher spheres take on the bodily characteristics of age. That is but a sense attribute. We shall be drawn as strongly to the soul that we loved whether that soul developed love in us as a grand-parent full of years, or as a little prattler taken out of our arms to grow to larger knowledge on a more advanced plane; and our spirits will recognize each other void of physical outer likeness, by the individual spirit character.

Man's intuitions have ever been protesting against presumption of age as a possibility in spirit, and it is doubtless the spiritual sense that we do not and cannot grow old save in body, which is the source of that quick resentment so many feel and show in advancing years at any intimation from others in regard to the outward marks of age in them; and they resent, too, Nature's relentless indications of gradual decay of physical power—such as failing sight, the lagging step, the loss of spring and energy in many ways. How often have we noted the shy air of deprecation with which the first pair of spectacles are put on in public by those whose waning eyesight forces their use. Birthday books, we may observe, are not much in vogue save among the younger generation.

The common weakness so frequently appearing

among ageing humanity finds expression in the advertising columns of the daily press in praise of lotions and mixtures calculated to conceal the ravages of time, such as wrinkles, baldness, gray hairs, etc. We may laugh if we choose at the man or woman who all ineffectually tries to conceal these inevitable marks of the passing years, but it is not only from the eyes of their fellows that such persons wish to hide these time-marks, but quite as much they wish to cheat themselves. Inwardly they do not feel themselves old or decaying in mental power, and this is their instinctive protest against being stamped as aged. Some of us will recall in this connection Mrs. Thrale's poem of "The Three Warnings" which Death had promised the farmer should be given before he was called out of the body ; but alas, failing sight, increasing deafness, and halting step had come to him, yet failed to teach him the lesson intended—these were not the sort of warnings he expected. In spirit he was still as young as ever.

We have an intimation of the continued youth of the spirit in the moral and intellectual activity in advanced age shown by many men and women such as Bismarck, Gladstone, Montefiore, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Dr. Furness, Harriet Martineau, Dorathea Dix, Julia Ward Howe, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and many others. Galileo was deep in his favorite studies at seventy years of age, and Mary Somerville, the astronomer, was learning a new language at ninety-two. Is it not likely that such as these, strong in spirit while occupying an aged and dilapidated body, should—transferred to

another plane of being, in a different form—go joyously on in existence with renewed vigor and growing powers?

Some may point to cases like those of Emerson and Alcott in old age, where the play of mind seemed wavering and fitful before the light of earthly life went out, to our eyes, as arguing that spirit only exists in conjunction with matter; but may it not be that the spiritual part of these was already partly withdrawn into the so near unseen, even before the connecting link was entirely severed by that change we name death? The mysteries of life and death are many, and our sense-blind eyes have not discovered all there is to know. Says Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

I am strong in the spirit—deep-thoughted, clear-eyed—
On the Heaven-heights of truth!
Oh, the soul keeps its youth—
But the body faints sore, it is tired in the race,
It sinks from the chariot ere reaching the goal;
It is weak, it is cold,
The rein drops from its hold—
It sinks back with the death in its face.
On chariot—on soul,
Ye are all the more fleet—
Be alone at the goal
Of the strange and the sweet!

And the soul of the poet Bryant had caught assurance of the barring out from the spirit-world of the weakness and decrepitude of that sense-attribute old age; and in his "Return of Youth" thus comforts a friend who regretted his lost strength and joy of youthful feeling—

Nay, grieve thou not, nor think thy youth is gone,
Nor deem that glorious season e'er could die,
Thy pleasant youth, a little while withdrawn,
Waits on the horizon of a brighter sky;

Waits, like the morn, that folds her wings and hides
Till the slow stars bring back her dawning hour;
Waits, like the vanished spring, that slumbering bides
Her own sweet time to waken bud and flower.

There shall he welcome thee, when thou shalt stand
On his bright morning hills, with smiles more sweet
Than when at first he took thee by the hand
Through the fair earth to lead thy tender feet,
He shall bring back, but brighter, broader still,
Life's early glory to thine eyes again
Shall clothe thy spirit with new strength, and fill
Thy leaping heart with warmer love than then.

Indeed it does seem impossible for reasoning man to resist the conviction that in some other sphere of existence shall be restored to him all the half-tasted joys of this life, with permission to drink his fill also of the fountain of youth and strength—that fountain which every tired soul thirsts after, which though here held as a fable, that fable has ever had a charm in the telling and hearing—the fountain of youth may well be found in the life of the spirit.

CHAPTER XXIV.

FORE GLEAMS.

In a private letter written in 1891 by the well-know journalist and poet, Lilian Whiting, of Boston, whose permission I have obtained to publish it, she relates the following remarkable psychical experience :

"On a night of last December I had a most wonderful experience. Now the Rationalist would claim that this I am about to tell you was a 'dream,' but if I know anything I know it was not ; know that I was just as truly awake as I am at this moment. I will tell it to you just as it seemed to me. I was suddenly awakened in the night by a feeling of swift motion, of being carried up through infinite space. My heart was beating to suffocation from the rapidity of the movement which was faster than any motion I ever experienced before. I was horizontally and perpendicularly placed in this swift drawing up, but I felt no support under me or above, but was propelled by an unseen and intangible but intense force.

"First was a sense of utter fright and bewilderment. Second, a mental struggle to recall my identity. I repeated to myself my name. Then I recalled the circumstances of the evening before—a caller who had been in ; what was said ; and then the details of my preparation for bed –a new gown arranged the last thing so that it might be ready to slip on without loss of time, etc. 'Yes,' I said, 'I am Lilian Whiting. I talked with —— about so-and-so last night and I went to bed in my own dear room. Now what has happened ?' All this while

I was being borne upward. At first there was an awful, a sickening fear that I should fall—that I should be let drop—but after a minute that vanished and I felt as safe as when treading the solid earth.

"After the above mental questioning like a flash came: 'O, I wonder if I am not dead! But I was perfectly well. What could I have died of?' The questioning was of intense curiosity, rather joyful than otherwise. My mind went back to my past, and I reviewed every little detail with a growing satisfaction in the fact that there seemed no reason why I should not die, and after thinking distinctly about my earthly ties and affairs I inclined to an optimistic view that after all it was no great matter; and I began to wonder if I should meet my father and mother at once, also 'Louise' a very dear friend of my earliest girlhood. Finally the motion stopped.

"Again I perceived (but did not see) several persons around me. 'Surely I have died,' I thought exultantly, "who could imagine it was so little a thing after all!' and my mind seemed to review all the usual speculations of the lower world of death. 'Can I go and tell' (a certain friend) 'how little a matter it is to die?' I seemed to speculate. Then I thought: 'Now I will not open my eyes at once, for perhaps it would frighten me, and I don't want to be frightened again!' Then lips were pressed on my forehead in a long, lingering, loving kiss which was my father's kiss from my babyhood; and then there were tender touches—my hair was caressingly smoothed, my hands were clasped, arms were about me, hands were on my shoulders—the whole sensation was as if your form were suspended horizontally in air and several of your closest and most loving friends were all around you caressing you in different ways.

"But I felt a peculiar—well, I call it to myself

'spirit-thrill' (for I have often felt that peculiar and indescribable thrill at times when circumstances would indicate that unseen friends were manifesting an interest in my affairs) and with that was blended a feeling of exaltation—an exaltation which I can no more describe than I could tell you of a color if you were blind. It was the most exquisite feeling in the world. I have often felt it to some degree but never in the completeness of this night.

"Still I did not open my eyes. It seemed to me to be merely a matter of choice, that if I opened them I should see—I knew not what. And intuition said: 'Wait till you have grown more accustomed to this; there is plenty of time.' But I was so bathed in ecstacy that I felt I could stand no more —just then. So I did not (though it seemed to me I could at any instant) open my eyes to see. I lay vaguely wondering where we were going. Then (for the first time in an audible voice) my father said: 'Well, I suppose the little girl must go back.' Now, 'little girl' was my father's name for me from infancy up to the last time I saw him—ten days before he passed away. Hearing this, the recognition of my father's kiss was confirmed and I said: 'O, it is papa! it is papa! That is his voice, and so I am dead. I am so glad.'

"I was caressed again and felt again my father's lingering kiss on my forehead—other kisses and hand clasps; and I began to descend. I felt the motion just as plainly as before, and was horror-stricken with desolation at the thought of going back to earth! Still I was borne down, down, down; then all at once I felt my bed under my body as I was gently laid upon it. I recognized its touch the moment I was placed on it as a solid foundation under me, just as you feel the table you lay your hand on.

"Then I lay still some little time I think,

again recalling my identity, my whereabouts, circumstances, etc. Presently I got up and lighted the gas and looked at the clock. It was then 4:25 a. m. I returned to bed and wonderingly reviewed and meditated on this strange experience, which to the best of my knowledge and belief was no dream, but a beautiful reality; a foretaste and initiatory glimpse into the secret of the transition of the body into higher and more harmonious conditions.

"Of course I don't believe my physical body made that journey. But I wish some one could have observed my material body during that time, and noted in what state it appeared to be, whether in natural repose of common sleep, or what! I never can make any one realize what a dividing line in life that experience was to me. I felt as if I had really died, but had been sent back just at the threshold of the Spirit World."

A very similar experience to that of Miss Whiting was once related in my presence by a gentleman who had no belief in Spiritualism, and who prefaced his narration by saying: "I call it a dream, though it did not seem like one to me at the time, so wonderfully real was it." In the sensation he had of being borne upward he thought himself accompanied and partially upheld by his dead mother to whom he was devotedly attached. He recognized and conversed with several departed relatives and acquaintances, some of whom gave him messages to bear to friends on earth. He felt the same reluctance to return, that Miss Whiting speaks of, when his mother said it was time for him to go back, and he had the same realizing sense of the materiality of his surroundings when

laid upon his bed. A singular feature of his experience was the fact that, when he fully realized he was in his own room, he found himself almost rigid with cold although the room was warm ; and he felt obliged to get up—although at an unseasonable hour before the dawn, and take a hot bath to restore circulation and warmth to his limbs.

A New York correspondent soon after the publication of Miss Whiting's psychical experience, in a private letter, thus described a similar one of her own: "I have been specially interested in an experience given by Lilian Whiting in your issue of February 23rd; it is so identical with one which came to me a few years ago, only in my case I was conscious throughout of my 'physical body' being still upon the bed—and while it was daylight, I was quite without any feeling that by opening my eyes I should see anything—nor was I conscious in any way of the presence of friends ; but like her I suddenly felt that I had been caught up in the mighty and awful swirl of the universe—no one can describe the sensation. I understood her description because I had felt it, and I too was so frightened by the awe of it, I think I lost much that might have otherwise been given me.

"I did not hear voices, but just as I felt physically faint and dizzy from the swift motion and the height I seemed to attain spiritually, I saw (without opening my eyes) the most wonderful scene of mountains, and mountains upon mountains stretching far away, seen through that beautiful mist which gives our own earth scenery its most exquis-

ite beauty—only this was so beyond anything I had even dreamed of on this mortal plane in the way of grandeur, and yet tenderness, of form and tone, I only wish I had words to convey to you the wonderful beauty of the vision that was thus granted me—or the sense of grandeur and immensity of motion which preceded the vision. Oh, it was exquisite! It faded as it came—leaving me with that solemn deep sense of utter blankness and silence which we who have been blessed by these 'special visitations' know so well.

"Ah, it is a wonderful, wonderful life the spirit friends have shown us these beautiful glimpses of, isn't it? and what undreamed of sweetness everywhere? There have been other exquisite experiences granted me that are priceless as soul experiences, though I question whether they would be of much importance to anyone but myself. 'Automatic' writing has brought me much of interest—and also much trash—as I presume it has to you, but my best and sweetest revelations have been born of the deeper consciousness of Being."

A like experience of being borne seemingly out of the body upwards toward great mountain heights from whence she observed spread out below her lovely and restful scenes of beauty and and peace, was related to me by one whose society friends would probably not believe such an experience possible to one whose known views are so extremely lucid and sensible.

CHAPTER XXV.

SPECIMENS OF AUTOMATIC WRITING.

The specimens of autographic writing, exhibited on the following pages, show some of the different chirographies in which communications are written by my hand. It is believed they will be useful for reference in investigations of so-called automatic writing.

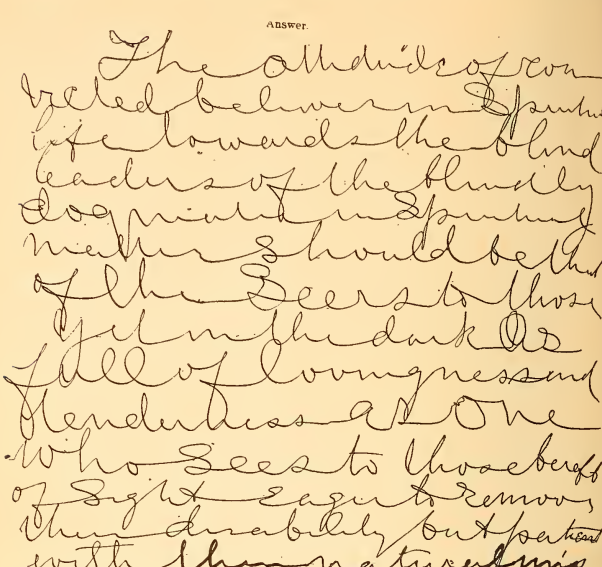
Handwriting is regarded by many as an indication of character. Disguising one's autograph so as to baffle attempts to identify it, or forging a signature, even by an expert penman, so that it cannot be distinguished from the genuine, is extremely difficult, and few can do it. Certain it is that I can write in only one style, and in that there is scarcely ever a perceptible variation.

During my earlier experiences, as I have already stated, there was great variety of style in the automatic writing, but it gradually became less, and now the style generally is uniform. But to ordinary observation, at least. there is very little resemblance between any of the automatically written scripts and my autograph. The style of "Pharos," who is now declared to be the amanuensis for other communicating intelligences, is shown in Plate on the next page.

Question.

What should be our true & reasonable attitude toward the Existing religious systems

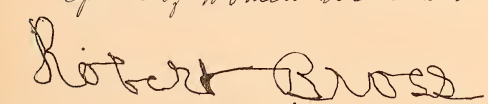
Answer.



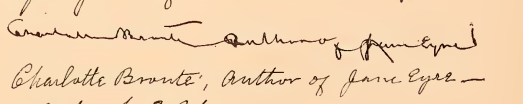
Copy by S. A. U.

The attitude of Convicted believers in Spiritual life towards the blind leaders of the blindly dogmatic in Spiritual matters should be that of the Seers to those yet in the dark, as full of lovingness and tenderness as one who sees to those bereft of sight, eager to remove their disability but patient with their natural mistakes and halting steps. Remember as they are so once were you, and they too shall be ultimately led to the light.

Sphere of women widens with progress of the Race — Copy by S. A. U.



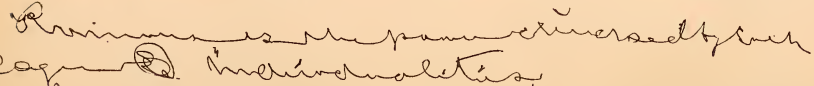
Robert Brose — Copy by S. A. U.



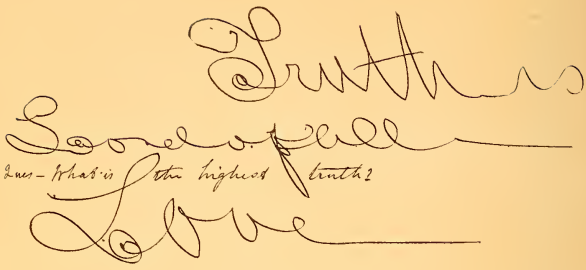
Charlotte Brontë, Author of Jane Eyre — Copy by S. A. U.

C. R. Clark — Copy by S. A. U.

Patrick — Copy by S. A. U.

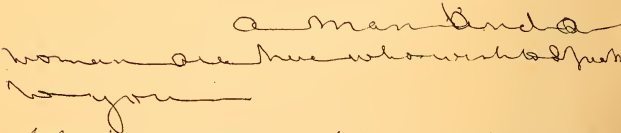


Ruinous is the power exercised by such individualities. — Copy by S. A. U.



Ques - What is the highest truth?

In regard to something we disputed this was written



Take Ayes and noes - Copy by S.A.U.

A Man and a woman are here who wish to speak to you.
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